the ALTERNATIVE: AN AMERICAN SPECTATOR

Fifteen Rounds to a Zeitgeist
by Vic Gold

Conservatism: A Libertarian Challenge
by Edith Efron

Among the Intellectualoids
by Stephen R. Maloney

Reviews by Sowell, Grant, O'Rourke, Gottfried

October 1975 • Volume 9, Number 1

The Continuing Crisis

■ A traditional North American August, the heat was so intense that many Americans dreamt of taking a holiday in equatorial Africa, and as the month crept on it grew difficult to say which became more insufferable, the weather or Mrs. Betty Ford, the garrulous and vacant first lady who seems to have dedicated her public life to proving that Martha Mitchell was indeed the wave of the future. In two interviews released during the month Mrs. Ford delivered up her views on constitutional law, moral philosophy, family life, drugs, and premarital sex amongst teenagers, all with the kind of rude ignorance that the media takes for candor.

■ Most of her asseverations were merely Washington *gauche*, but here continual suggestions regarding the voluptuous uses to which she puts the Fords' "king-size" bed are best described as pathetic. While the world howled with laughter at the Sensuous First Lady, the People's Republic of China redeemed American honor by rushing forth with the reverse of Mrs. Ford's idiocy, a Chinese sex manual abounding with dark admonitions against enormities like masturbation: the cause of cerebral overstimulation, dizziness, insomnia, general weakness, and "the erosion of revolutionary will"—afflictions invincible even to the wizardry of acupuncture.

■ At any rate and notwithstanding Mrs. Ford's crusade for sexual enlightenment, Victorian inhibitions persist. In Crown Point, Indiana, Judge James Clement came down on behalf of the forces of fuddy duddyism when he brusquely postponed the sentencing of youthful murderer Mr. Earl Ray Hackett, who stood before him celebrating life by smearing human feces on his hands and clothes. "He just went bananas," exclaimed a prudish bailiff. A Pennsylvania court held that that comely turnpike toll-booth attendant, discharged for copulating with a truck driver in her toll booth during working hours, was not entitled to back pay upon reinstatement. And in New York a Brooklyn Heights man was summarily arrested for attempting to sexually abuse a park bench.

■ Just days before the *Washington Post* published a Congressional poll revealing that some freshman liberals regard the U.S. as more of a threat to world peace than Russia or China, the venerable National Institute of Mental Health announced that roughly twenty million Americans suffer some form of unreported mental illness. And oratory reminiscent of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison was again heard in our nation's capital when Congressman John L. Burton took to the floor of the House declaring "Forced utilization of pay toilets...a regressive tax that hits hardest at feminine persons, although masculine persons must bear part of the burden." According to a bill introduced by this great person, any organization using these odious devices in its comfort station will *ipso facto* lose its federal funding. Freedom lives!

■ On August 21 the Labor Department announced that consumer prices rose in July by the largest amount for any month this year, making it the second consecutive month of substantial increases. In Munich, capitalist impresario Mr. Hans Beirlein purchased the rights to "The Internationale," allowing him to reap royalties every time the socialist anthem pipes up in West Germany, East Germany, Austria, or Switzerland. And scowls were seen at the *New York Times* when Mr. Thomas C. Hauser, a young lawyer, admitted that he was the real author of those cute letters supposedly written to public officials by a nine-year-old boy and published on the *Times* op-ed page. In a fussy statement the publisher of the Pentagon Papers asserted that Mr. Hauser's "misrepresentations... involve serious questions of ethics." Good point, that!

■ While the capitalist horror continues to grip American life, Indian social democracy has struck another breathtaking blow for human progress. Finally facing up to the marvel of her own virtue, Mother Gandhi has assumed absolute control of Indian society. Now personally ministering to the lives of six hundred million Indians and millions more cows, she is also seeing to it that members of the loyal opposition receive three nutritious meals per day and ample rest and relaxation in a scientifically designed *total* environment. Further, the progressive Indian parliament spent much of early August rescinding obsolete legislation like that flagitious election law that threatened to retire Mother Gandhi to San Clemente. Tremors of fear were felt through Washington when pro-Western forces launched a successful coup against Sheik Mujibur Rahman, the good-government head of Bangla Desh. Mr. James Hoffa has become like unto Howard Hughes. Progressive Satellite Beach, Florida, has erased yet another vestige of the Dark Ages; henceforth all manhole covers will be referred to as personhole covers. And the very heart of revolutionary democracy is threatened in Portugal where misanthropic citizens are demanding reactionary desiderata like freedom of speech, majority rule, and political parties.

■ In Cotonou, Dahomey, revolutionary life has finally returned to normalcy after that shocking event that induced President Mathieu Kerekou to call out the army, crack down on dissidents, and dramatically proclaim on Radio Cotonou that "the revolution is not a gala dinner. Neither is it a child's game," while urging the armed forces to "draw the correct lessons from the event." Serious students of world politics will recall that "the event" took place on June 21 when Mr. Kerekou burst into the home of Interior Minister Michel Aikpe, found him *flagrante delicto* with Dahomey's first lady, and shot him to death as he fled naked on his government bicycle. The classic political confrontation!

■ Back in the United States the Bicentennial fever continues to inspire the noblest of sentiments. At a meeting of New York liberals, Senator Birch Bayh raised his voice above the din of catcalls and guffaws directed at his Bicentennial tie and augustly declared that he was running for President so that it would become "possible for an American to wear a patriotic tie without being embarrassed." And an even more high-minded thought comes from Chicago's Mr. Marvin J. Rosenblum who is proposing that Americans observe the solemnity of next July 4 by forming a human chain from coast to coast. According to Mr. Rosenblum's calculations such an awesome patriotic display could be accomplished with only two percent of the population standing along the interstate highway system. Some have dismissed the proposal as hopelessly visionary, but insiders speculate that ideas like this could make Mr. Rosenblum a front-runner for the 1976 Democratic Presidential nomination; after all, his proposal has more than a whiff of the 1972 Democratic platform to it.

■ Higher education continues to offer Americans vast mounds of luscious humor. For instance there was that gorgeous swindle at the University of Puget Sound where Mr. John Jandali, Ph.D., whose formative years were spent at the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, hoodwinked the faculty into allowing him to teach a course on Egyptian politics in scenic Cairo. No sooner had he landed his gullible students in their Cairo dormitories than he gathered up their combined boodle and hot-footed it to Las Vegas. A comic episode to be sure, but an episode whose richness was actually enhanced by the orotund UPS president who, hearing of Mr. Jandali's unscheduled sabbatical, seized the moment for goo-goo ritual: "This has been a most unfortunate and distressing experience for everyone concerned. I hope that we, as a community, will use it constructively in our efforts to become sensitive, concerned human beings with a keen awareness of our obligations to others and a deep commitment to the requirements and the importance of due process." Norman Cousins, we hear you!

■ There is going to be a new assessment of the evidence in the assassination of Mr. Robert Kennedy, and on August 23 the hoary and discredited domino theory was discredited even further when the Communist Pathet Lao announced they had seized power in the kingdom of Laos and established what they impishly call a revolutionary government—no one was reported injured. Ever aware of their social responsibilities, the Ku Klux Klan of central Tennessee has replaced its traditional fiery cross with electric crosses, which do not pollute the air or constitute fire hazards. Charles Manson has applied for membership in the California Civil Liberties Union. And Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas is reputedly feeling fit once again. Said a buoyant associate, "Bill feels as though he were seventy-five again, and he looks it too."

■ Finally, felicitations to Mr. Lloyd Thoren of Petersburg, Indiana, who has been awarded "Atheist of the Year" by the American Atheist convention. Mr. Thoren's rural telephone company is the only one in America to feature a "Dial-an-Atheist" line. —*RET,jr*

Editor in Chief: R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.; **Publisher:** Baron Von Kannon of the Saturday Evening Club; **Circulation Manager:** Ronald E. Burr; **Managing Editor:** Adam Meyerson; **Assistant Managing Editor:** Joyce Goldberg; **Production Manager:** Martin E. Northway; **Executive Secretary:** Mary M. Zingleman; **Senior Editors:** Terry Krieger, William Kristol, Rev. George Nathan; **Art Advisor:** Elliott Banfield; **Associates:** David Brudnoy, Jameson Campaigne, Jr., D.W. Cooper, John R. Coyne, Jr., Alan Reynolds; **Art:** Thomas Bewick, Fred Marshall; **Contributors:** Aram Bakshian, Jr., Frank W. Blatchford III, A. Lawrence Chickering, Christopher DeMuth, J.P. Duggan, Terry Eastland, John C. Elsbury, Jerry Gerde, Fran Griffin, Kenneth Grubbs, Anthony Harrigan, Neil Howe, W. Wesley McDonald, Robert McTiernan, William H. Nolte, Gary North, Karl O'Lessker, Terry O'Rourke, Marc F. Plattner, G.W. Plunkitt, Peter J. Rusthoven, Benjamin Stein, J. Whitney Stillman, Richard S. Wheeler, Timothy J. Wheeler; **Legal Counsel:** Solitary, Poor, Brutish, Nasty & Short.

the ALTERNATIVE: AN AMERICAN SPECTATOR

5 **Vic Gold**.....**Fifteen Rounds to a Zeitgeist** 5
9 **Edith Efron**.....**Conservatism: A Libertarian Challenge** 9
16 **Robert McTiernan**.....**Taft and the New Isolationism** 16
19 **Baron Von Kannon**.....**An Embarrassed Note from the Publisher** 19
21 **Jude Wanniski**.....**The Quiet Tax** 21

Departments

2 **The Continuing Crisis**..... 2
4 **Editorial**.....**R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.** 4
8 **The Nation's Pulse**.....**Peter J. Rusthoven** 8
14 **Among the Intellectualoids**.....**Stephen R. Maloney** 14
27 **The Bootblack Stand**.....**George Washington Plunkitt** 27
28 **The Great American Saloon Series**.....**Siegfried Weisberger** 28
30 **The Talkies**.....**Robert Asahina** 30
31 **Brudnoy's Index**.....**David Brudnoy** 31
32 **The Public Policy**.....**Adam Meyerson** 32
36 **Current Wisdom**.....**Assorted Jackasses** 36
37 **Index for Volume Eight, 1974-75**..... 37

Reviews

22 **Paul Gottfried**.....***Weimar: A Cultural History*** 22
24 **James Grant**.....***The Bankers*** 24
26 **Thomas Sowell**.....***On Economics and Society*** 26
33 **Terry O'Rourke**.....***The Price of Perfect Justice*** 33

Contributors

Robert Asahina is managing editor of the *Public Interest*...**David Brudnoy** is a Boston television commentator and a nationally syndicated columnist...**Edith Efron**, the author of *The News Twisters*, is a contributing editor to *TV Guide*...**Vic Gold**, a veteran Washington political jock who fights under the name of Packy McFarland, is the author of *I Don't Need You When I'm Right: Confessions of a Washington PR Man*...**Paul Gottfried** chairs the history department of Rockford College...**James Grant** is on the editorial staff of *Barron's*...**Robert McTiernan** studies law at the University of Pittsburgh...**Stephen R. Maloney** teaches English at the University of Georgia...**Adam Meyerson** is managing editor of *The Alternative*...**Terry O'Rourke** is a Los Angeles attorney...**Peter J. Rusthoven** is studying law at Harvard, where he is an officer of the *Harvard Law Review*...**Thomas Sowell** is professor of economics at UCLA; his latest book is *Race and Economics*...**Baron Von Kannon** is publisher of *The Alternative*...**Jude Wanniski** writes editorials for the *Wall Street Journal*...**Siegfried Weisberger** is founder of Peabody's Bookstore, a Baltimore literary haunt frequented by Fitzgerald, Mencken, and many other writers.

The Alternative: An American Spectator *is published monthly except July and September at 102 West Sixth Street, Bloomington, Indiana. Application to mail at second class postage rates is pending at Bloomington, Indiana, and additional mailing offices.*

One-year subscriptions (ten issues) cost $8.00, and all correspondence (manuscripts, subscriptions, threatening letters, federal grants, etc.) should be sent to The Alternative, *P.O. Box 877, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.*

Microfilm editions of The Alternative *are available from Xerox University Microfilms 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan.*

Published remarkably without regard to race, color, creed, or (most redundantly of all) national origin—and yes, sex, even sex.

Copyright The Alternative *magazine 1975.*
Volume 9, Number 1, October 1975.

Editorial/R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

The Catastrophic Imperative

Contemporary America works cruel and enigmatic treacheries on simple folk like me. Reality keeps changing false faces, and lo, that which I once perceived as a trifling or a benefit suddenly whips off its sheep's clothing, bares its teeth, and latches onto my leg. The CIA turns out to be the KGB, the free society becomes a conspiracy against both womanhood and the fuliginous, Israel becomes the last redoubt of Nazism, doctors are apparently trying to poison me, and prison inmates are actually oppressed poets and metaphysicians while prison guards are criminals.

A theme of epistemological import inheres through all this, to wit: that which is actual, true, and objective is really that which most flagrantly violates mere appearance, plain logic, and hard facts. This is the dogma adhered to by the average reader of the *New York Review of Books*, and because it has always struck me, provincial that I am, as the dogma of a congenital ignoramus, I shall forever be victimized by the astounding revelations of the Morally Committed. Nevertheless, I shall remain steadfast in my belief that sound facts and careful logic are the surest routes to the truth. Unto death I shall persevere in my simple belief that the editor of the *New York Times* editorial page would be improved by electric shock treatment.

For years the message of the left *cognoscenti* has been iterated and reiterated with the same ardent fixity that one expects from, say, a Seventh Day Adventist. Internationally, those regimes that appear most menacing and oppressive to human freedom are freedom's most idealistic defenders. Domestically, those institutions and policies traditionally held to be the bulwarks of civilized society are actually inimical to it. Appearances notwithstanding, the freest society on earth is the most oppressive; America's enemies are its friends; its friends are its enemies. Such principles seem to comprise an invincible prescription for catastrophe, yet they are urged upon us by some of the most distinguished pundits in this advanced Republic...and still I snicker.

Unfortunately such imbecile notions are inflicted upon me at every turn. An enthusiasm for America's enemies, a disrelish for its friends, a burning passion for the most counterintuitive reasoning—this motley band of notions creeps out of the universities and the high-toned reviews and steals into the great newspapers, the broadcasting networks, and even the gaping mouths of our pols. Hardly a week goes by that I do not encounter some knuckle-headed intellectualoid pouting about American improprieties or extolling the achievement of, say, Mao Tse-tung, one of the world's most experienced butchers and a poet whose taste in verse is comparable to the late Mr. Hitler's taste in architecture. How does one explain such perversity? I have spent a generous amount of time reading about and analyzing the minds that fasten on such fantasies. I have made field trips to Washington, to New York, and even to London to watch the rascals in action. I have taken up the matter with a neurologist, and I have settled on four hypotheses.

For my first tentative explanation I am wholly indebted to the English sage, Mr. Malcolm Muggeridge, who eloquently stated it in his essay "The Decade of the Great Liberal Death Wish" (*Esquire*, December 1970). Now I believe that Mr. Muggeridge casts his net too wide when he asserts as he does in this essay that a death wish stalks all liberals; but assuredly a death wish, or something very like a death wish, explains the perverse doings of some liberals. Certainly unpleasantness lies in the path of that smug and sectarian creature who is always so fond of America's enemies, so critical of its friends, and so contemptuous of its institutions. Death, whether consciously or unconsciously longed for, does indeed stalk such behavior. Mr. Muggeridge's is an explanation undoubtedly helpful in explaining such mischief.

Yet not all of those whom Mr. Muggeridge describes as liberals have death wishes. I should say that only the more intellectual liberals are so troubled, that is to say the kind of liberal who lives his whole life according to the precepts of logical positivism until suddenly one morning he awakes recalling that on that precise day some thirty years before he spent an afternoon reading *Liberalism and Social Action* when he was supposed to attend his first fox trot lesson; disconsolate and a little randy he spends the rest of his life not unlike Mr. Ponce de Leon. Eventually he dies of an overdose during a glandular injection. Let us be charitable, there are other kinds of liberals and definitely there are other kinds of *cognoscenti*.

To explain their perversity one must turn to one of the most underestimated causes in history. As a hypothesis it explains vast epics. It explains the rise of great leaders. It explains the causes of ghastly wars. Grand cultures have arisen because of it. I speak of man's eternal proclivity for stupidity. Whether it be Pickett's Charge or the medieval Christian's dread of house cats, memorable disjunctions in history have been caused by nothing more unusual than a botched judgment. What impels your local pundit to swat capitalist enterprise even while capitalist advertising sustains him, or to genuflect before British socialism, though the mail service operates at the speed of erosion, might be nothing more sinister than a low I.Q. Turn it over in your mind. A death wish might have motivated Bertrand Russell, but what of Dan Rather—he thought existentialism was a treatment for late bed-wetters. I have always thought it curious that none of the great thinkers of the West has ever propounded an historical interpretation based on the prodigious influence of stupidity. There are Marxist historians and Catholic historians, there are those who hold to cyclical theories; why have there never been stupidist historians? A lot can be accomplished by one stupid prince.

A third hypothesis that I offer to explain leftist perversity is one that I do not care to dwell on at too great a length. It is too shocking and I do not want to be taken as a *provocateur* or a kill-joy. Succinctly stated, I believe that a small number of pundits—generally the most intelligent of the breed—are motivated by evil. I realize that such allegations are extremely jarring to modern sensibilities, but I still maintain the belief that there remain in our midst scoundrels whose excesses transcend mere naughtiness. I shall present no names, but I would suggest that some of those around us who so furiously exclaim against what is rational and salutary and are forever prescribing what is palpably destructive are themselves consciously evil, even exhilaratingly evil. Such creatures have occurred before. May I remind you of the Stalinists of yesteryear; surely a few of them understood old Joe's Moscow trials.

Finally, I offer a fourth hypothesis for explaining the perverse persons who believe the unbelievable and insist that we believe it too. Some of them seem to have a lust for power, others seem to have a hatred of reality, but all of them have something more fundamental coursing through their malevolent spirits: it is an arrogance, an insolence, and a passion. It is hubris, an arrogant and suicidal aspiration toward some gauzy infinite like equality. All the highfalutin disquisitions of our *cognoscenti* aside, these infinites are neither aspired to for their practical value nor for their theoretical comeliness but rather they are chosen for their dramatic value. The more idiotic the infinite one prescribes for mankind, the more effectively one dramatizes his own audacity, his own aloofness from the mundane, his own heroic self. The gullible may believe that Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. is engaged in a lifelong struggle for a noble cause, but the wise few realize Arthur is really engaged in a torrid tango with his spirit.

A perfect specimen of the breed is John Kenneth Galbraith. How seriously should

(*continued on page 25*)

The Alternative • October 1975 • Volume 9, Number 1

Vic Gold

Fifteen Rounds to a Zeitgeist

****

(In Which a One Hunnert Percent American Fight Freak Self-Analyzes & Defends His Irrational Bias Vs. Muhammad Ali)

****

The Preliminaries

****

"There is that segment of jock journalism, those old-guard sportswriters and sportscasters of the country, who will never forgive Ali for betraying them... Almost overnight, as far as they were concerned, Cassius Clay, the Olympic gold medalist as a light heavyweight, changed from a charming young fighter who was good copy into a Black Muslim who wanted to be called Muhammad Ali. He also did not hide the fact that he did not particularly trust whites...."

New-guard sportswriter J.D. Bethea
The Washington Star.

"The Original Ali was the adopted son of the Prophet Muhammad. Now a modern Muhammad might become the leader of his people."

Old-guard White Liberal
Norman Mailer.

****

The Introductions

****

J.D. Bethea, meet Norman Mailer. Norman—the most cloying literary jock-sniffer of our time. Maybe, all time. Consider, as evidence of his claim to the title, the following line, which describes Muhammad Ali's reaction on being informed that Norman Mailer does roadwork:

"...[W]ith the exception of Eric Segal and George Gilder, he had never heard of a writer who liked to run—who wanted the brilliance of the mind discharged through the ankles..."

Tell me, J.D., do you believe Muhammad Ali really said that? Did he ever *think* that? Eric Segal? George Gilder? Joe Frazier wants to know who them dudes fought. *Brilliance of the mind discharged.....?*

Enough. Whether Ali himself ever uttered or cogitated such radchicery is neither here nor there. But it will be in Manila, September 30. For since Frazier is self-immunized against such hyper-intellectual crap—doing his roadwork, as he does, with other fighters—there will be a special issue drawn when he and Ali, the Great White Liberal Hope, meet at month's end in their rubber match. My point being that Ali runs around with the likes of those who say, think, and even earn a living excreting such brilliance.

My first question then, to all new-guardsmen convinced that every old-guard jock journalist and fight freak who dislikes Muhammad dislikes him because he "betrayed" us by becoming a Black Muslim—is simply this:

I am puzzled. *How can it be that a man who does "not particularly trust whites" spends so much time on the road spilling his soul to a blue-eyed honky bullshit artist like Norman Mailer?*

****

The Warning Buzzer

****

By now you should have me spotted, J.D. I am a traditionalist, all right, part of an old-guard that does not forgive Ali for past transgressions; though I would not go so far as to say, as you do, that my kind could *never* forgive him, because—who knows?—the man might yet change his style.

No, I do not mean by renouncing Black Muslimism and embracing the Southern Baptist rites, or by changing his name back to Cassius Clay. I mean, the style in which he chooses to utilize his God/—or, if he prefers, Allah/given—talents *inside* the ring. Not that his playing to the Mailer gallery, inside and outside, is irrelevant to my bias.

However, if new-guardsmen must give *some* racial interpretation to a Caucasian fight freak's prejudice against the Muhammad Ali style, let me put it this way: he fights (and even talks) like a lot of bad *white* fighters I used to watch.

You see, J.D., I am not your ordinary run-of-the-barstool old-guard bigot. No indeed. I do not take on irrational biases without rational provocation.

Understand: I did not like yon Muhammad, *even when he was Cassius.*

****

The Main Event

****

Let us proceed, for purposes of argument—since we are arguing anyway—by stipulating that there will be two contending *black* heavyweight traditions in Manila September 30:

In this corner, claiming to represent the Jack Johnson tradition, Muhammad Ali.

In the opposite corner, representing the Joe Louis tradition, Joe Frazier.

My bias is double-distilled. First, I am a Louis man for all the reasons you might

expect of a fight freak who grew up during the thirties and forties. Second, every athlete should be judged, as an athlete, within the framework and standards of his own physical discipline. Frazier is a better representative of his tradition than Ali is of his: an *intra*-racist aspersion I will presently discuss in more detail than readers not yet thirty may care to know.

But this is my cathartic self-analysis and I am, as you were forewarned, a fight freak.

****

All right. I grew up in New Orleans but had a cousin, Harold Jacobs, who fought professionally out of Chicago. Harold was a heavyweight who moved well on his feet and owned very fast hands, particularly his left. In fact, with the exception of Bicycle Bob Pastor, let me say (as a matter of family pride) that my cousin, potentially, was the best pure heavyweight jabber of his time.

By *pure* jabber, understand, I mean simply that with a hook, cross, or uppercut my cousin could not punch his way out of a Norman Mailer metaphor (or whatever passed for Norman Mailer metaphors in those days. *Norman Corwin metaphors?*). But God protects. About the second time my cousin was tagged with a sharp right counter over his pure left jab, he met in executive session with his brilliant ankles. Their decision was unanimous: he hung up his own gloves and began teaching the art of the jab to other young heavyweights, who *could* punch their way out of metaphors.

Unfortunately, out of not much else. You will remember, no doubt, my cousin Harold's contender, Johnny Paychek. You don't? Well, he was the Great White Hope for the latter part of the month of March 1940. The then heavyweight champion of the world took out my cousin's meal ticket, in two. It was a sad night for the family, but what I recall most vividly about that fight—as I do fondly, these latter years, about all those old Louis fights—was that we had a world champion who did not taunt, humiliate, or demean his opponent, either before, during, or after a match. That was not Joe Louis' style. That night, in Madison Square Garden, he just took Johnny out; and caught the next train to Chicago. Never, they used to say about the champion, a wasted motion. Or word.

There are those new-guardsmen, I know, who, in the spirit of these times, now imply that Louis, by comporting himself as a champion who did not offend white sensibilities, was little more than a closet Uncle Tom. But that argument generally comes from members of the generation that knew not Joseph: the Bullshit Generation that runs its ideological miles with the likes of Norman M. For we benighted fight freaks of that golden pre-television era—freaks of all ages, races, previous conditions of irrational bias—recognized Joe Louis for what he was:

We called him *class*. The ring announcer once described the champion as "a credit to his race." But Winchell corrected that. He added, "the human race, of course."

****

However, as I say, Joe Louis, to understate the case, was not much of a verbalizer. Reporters called him Melonjaws. The Mumbler. As in our classic concept of the ideal champion, he did his talking inside the ring, with the implements of his trade. He was an activist of a different sort. A young black, *out* of an Alabama sharecropping family, *from* the slums of Detroit. (Even as Joe Frazier, not much of a verbalizer, fought his way *out* of South Carolina sharecropping, *from* the ghettos of Philadelphia.)

Indeed, if Howard Cosell had been marketing his verbosity to mass audiences during the thirties—Cosell, that ultimate new-guard plastic packager of jock "soul" for white audiences—he would have colored Louis dull. (Even as he and others now color Frazier, who also prefers to talk, as well as do roadwork, like a fighter.) Among Louis' contemporaries, Cosell would no doubt have gone, for color, to clowns like Lou Nova, of the "Cosmic Punch," and bigmouth Tony Galento. They were the hype men of that era, and Ali, whomever he may be compared to inside a ring, is, outside it, in the tradition of those dismal White Hopes.

Cosell, yes, would have *loved* Nova and Galento. (Even as he now adores his friend Ali, who, we are told, does "not particularly trust whites.") Cosell would have sold them to the public as "free spirits." But in that innocent era, when our national sports *Zeitgeist* had not yet been intellectually overwhelmed by the new-guard, we fight freaks—all ages, races, biases—recognized such "free spirits" for what they were:

We called them bums. White, black, no difference. Just, *bums*.

****

Pause Ten Seconds for Commercial Break Delivered by a Fighter Who Writes His Own Material

"I want him like a hog wants slops."
Joe Frazier on Muhammad Ali

****

Those who package the mystique of that charming young fighter we now know as Muhammad Ali never fail to draw the parallel between their product and Jack Johnson. It is a phony parallel.

Jack Johnson, like Sam Langford and other black fighters of the early part of this century, was victimized by white bigotry. Whether the same can be said for the young Clay—product of a middle-class black family (no hog-slopping for him!), nurtured in his career by a tender-loving all-white group of Louisville businessmen and solicitous white handlers, including the best (white) trainer in the business—I leave that for Ali's literary camp-followers to contend.

But as for the way Clay/Ali handles his business *inside* a ring, on that subject, this freak has certain firsthand observations: a Jack Johnson he might have been, given his magnificent physical talents. But a Jack Johnson he is not. Let me explain....

****

As a white boy growing up in New Orleans I had a boxing coach named Whitey. Not Whitey Esnault, another Whitey. You will have to take my word for it, *all* New Orleans boxing coaches who taught white kids how to handle themselves in those days were named Whitey. The ones who trained the black kids, in the rundown gyms, they were all Georges. But they did not concern us then, since young blacks did not qualify, under Louisiana law, to enter a ring with whites. This was because they could not interpret key sections of the Louisiana constitution; although they could, we were told, punch.

One day, with the approach of the annual Golden Gloves competition, my coach explained, in graphic detail, what invariably happened to white New Orleans entries who went into interstate competition. I will never forget what he said:

"Dey go to Nashville for regionals," he told us. "Whip up on some farm boys from Mississippi. So dey go to Chicago for nationals. Get inna ring, t'row dere best punch at some bullet-headed nigger. Nigger, he just stands dere and blinks. Next day, dey're onna train back home."

****

Whitey was not stating a case for black supremacy in the ring. Just outlining a tactical problem. I do not remember him as a radical social innovator: I think all he was saying was that it would have been better for his young wards to grow to maturity taking on competition as it came, not as it was hand-picked by the lily-whites who governed the state's customs and mores. But my coach was ahead of his time, leaving him and his fellow Whiteys with their tactical problem: how to train New Orleans white boys to compete successfully *inter-* as well as *intra*state.

They developed a system—and if you have ever seen a white New Orleans boxer work you will immediately know what I mean when I mention the names Ralph Dupas and Willie Pastrano. That system was "run-and-jab." Or, if you prefer, "float-and-sting." One of the trainers who later moved to town and adopted it was the younger brother of professional matchmaker Chris Dundee. His name was Angelo.

Every Monday night, New Orleans fight freaks would go downtown to the Coliseum to see Chris Dundee's feature attractions. He always gave us the finest

1962: Sonny Liston is "the Ugly Bear"...
1965: Floyd Patterson is "the Rabbit"...
1974: George Foreman is "the Zombie"...
1975: Joe Frazier is "the Gorilla"...

....Thus does Muhammad Ali perceive and advertise the blackness of others in terms that titillate soft-headed whites ...Alexander Portnoy is sepia...why is it that this "leader" who "does not trust whites" always reserves his meanest pejoratives for "his own people"?

in runners, jabbers, floaters, and stingers. We, the freaks in the back rows, showed our appreciation by contemptuously naming our local white fighters after horses. Dupas became *Native Dancer*. Pastrano was *Carry Back*.

Then, one night in the early 1960s, some years after I had left the city, Angelo Dundee imported an out-of-towner to fight in an all-black match. They tell me that Angelo's entry was built like a dark dreadnought, and I believe them, because I had seen him fight as an amateur. Physically, he looked like a new Jack Johnson. Yet, oddly—or maybe not so oddly when you consider his trainer's background—the new Jack Johnson fought like...Willie Pastrano!

On the front rows, as I got the story, the smart money guessed that with Angelo's handling, this charming young man could go all the way. But in the back, my raucous freak friends had other ideas. After three rounds they began calling the new Jack Johnson after another Louisville runner—*Chateauguay*, the Derby winner. But by the time the decision was announced (in his favor), they had settled on a permanent nickname. They called him Cautious Clay.

****

And exactly how much does Muhammad Ali owe to Angelo Dundee? Let us count the ways. His championship, certainly. And with that, maybe his name.

The truth of the story is conceded, even by the new-guard:

February 25, 1964. In the fifth round of his title fight against Sonny Liston, Cassius Clay, his eyes burning from a foreign substance believed to be on Liston's gloves, decides to quit. So great is his pride—his will to win, to emerge as a "leader of his people"—that Clay, protesting the pain, refuses to answer the bell. Dundee pulls Clay's stool away and shoves him center-ring. Two rounds later, Liston quits.....

At a news conference the following day, Cassius Clay announced to the world that he was a Black Muslim convert who, from that moment forward, wanted to be called Muhammad Ali. And, oh yes...he did not hide the fact that he did not particularly trust whites.

****

Fast forward speed: *November 22, 1965.* Close-up of Ali, Nemesis of Great White Hopes. For 11 rounds the champion toys with an opponent who, as everyone in the arena can see, has suffered a dislocated back vertebra. The opponent's handlers urge him to quit, but though in excrutiating pain he will not. He wants to finish on his feet or be carried out, in the work ethic of his trade. Knowing this, Ali settles down to a long evening's entertainment. Round after round the champion deals out punishment in sharp, but never quite lethal, doses. The fight is a charade in agony, which might be justified by psycho-historians of the ring as retribution for the wrongs of centuries. Except for the fact that the opponent is Floyd Patterson.

****

Soundtrack on Ali the Showman, taunting his opposition, hyping the gate: *1962.* Sonny Liston is "the Ugly Bear." Liston is a black; ... *1965.* Patterson is "the Rabbit." Patterson is a black; ... *1974.* George Foreman is "the Zombie." Foreman is a black; ... *1975.* Joe Frazier is "the Gorilla." Frazier is a black. ....Thus does Muhammad perceive and advertise the blackness of others, in terms that titillate soft-headed whites. Alexander Portnoy in sepia, the self-loathing black. Tell me, J.D., why is it that this "leader" who "does not trust whites" manages always to reserve his meanest pejoratives for "his own people"?

****

(Do I stretch a point? Put the same words in Jerry Quarry's mouth and give me a reading on Howard Cosell's reaction.)

****

So I plead guilty. This fight freak does not simply dislike Muhammad Ali and his predecessor Cassius Clay, but I fervently hope that, separately and severally, they and their mystique are knocked on their collective butt, come September 30. Not because Ali has betrayed *my* confidence as an old-guardsman, but because he has betrayed the confidence of others. For if, as his literary roadmate claims, Ali might one day emerge as a leader of "his people," he shapes up as a false leader. False to his past, false to his potential. True through the years only to that which he claims to despise. A chameleon in black-and-white. The perfect ringer for these times.

****

Finally, there is Joe Frazier, born thirty years too late. Frazier is a great fighter, made all the greater because he is a fighter of limited natural gifts. He is what my coach, Whitey, used to warn us against. He will take a punch, two punches, three punches. He does not run, or float, but bears in, willing to absorb three-to-five, simply to land one. He knows no other way:

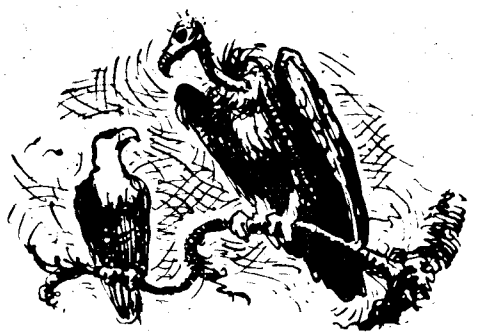
In the first round of the first fight he ever lost, Frazier is knocked unconscious —on his feet, but unconscious for all medical purposes—by a single punch thrown by George Foreman. Frazier goes down. He gets up—unconscious, but on instinct. Frazier is knocked down. He gets up. Is knocked down. Gets up. Is knocked down again....

****

In a television session with his friend Cosell, Muhammad Ali, playing to his gallery, called Joe Frazier "ignorant." Meaning? I guess, that the brilliance of his mind is not discharged through his ankles.....

We shall see. Class, we once believed, will always out. But then again, given the perversity of these times, Schmeling might beat Louis and take the title back to Germany. □

The Nation's Pulse



by Peter J. Rusthoven

The Finland Follies

A few weeks ago, America's Gerald Ford, the Soviet Union's Leonid Brezhnev, and the presidents, prime ministers, premiers, and/or party leaders of some 33 other nations concluded with appropriate pomp the "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe," held at Helsinki, Finland. The closing ceremony featured what has long been *de rigueur* at such affairs, namely, the formal signing of an "official declaration" (in this instance entitled, with somewhat more pretension than usual, "The Final Act"). After each of the assembled statesmen had inscribed his name, the green-leather bound document was placed in a vault some 60 feet below the surface of the earth, there to rest, presumably throughout eternity, symbol of the latest in a seemingly endless series of meetings, conferences, agreements, and accords carried on in the name of détente.

The Helsinki conference was the high point of Ford's fifth foreign trip in the first year of his Presidency. Much of this jaunt was devoted to the form of international statecraft our Chief Executives seem most dearly to love—i.e., planting trees in Yugoslavia, getting gifts of native dolls from Polish children, joining in a Rumanian folk dance in Bucharest, or getting a 250-pound cake in West Germany. Helsinki itself, although it was the largest European summit since the Congress of Vienna in 1815 (where Metternich, Castlereagh, Hardenberg, and Alexander I divided up post-Napoleonic Europe), seemed in many ways merely a more serious version of such showmanship—drama, instead of light operetta, one might say, but theater nonetheless. The commentators were agreed that little of substance occurred at the meeting. And Ford himself seemed to encourage this understated view of the summit, noting at its close that "History will judge this conference not by what we say here today, but [by] what we do tomorrow; not by the promises we make, but by the promises we keep."

Now this statement seems true enough, and since the usual problem with these highly publicized conclaves of leaders is that people overrate their significance, one is tempted to let it drop. Nevertheless, Ford's little valedictory, and the general coverage of Helsinki as a predominantly ceremonial event, seem sufficiently off-mark to warrant further comment. For Helsinki is, I believe, one conference that history *should* judge by what was said, as much as by what may subsequently occur. And in terms of evaluating what the United States achieved, that judgment should not be flattering.

Helsinki's significance revolves around its only major substantive development: the ratification by the United States (and by the West in general) of the post-World War II division of Europe. The Communization of Eastern Europe—warned against by Churchill near the war's end, seemingly but grudgingly acquiesced in at Yalta, enforced with typical Soviet subtlety in Hungary and Czechoslovakia—thus received, for the first time, the official sanction of American foreign policy. In the past, we had sworn never to sign a peace treaty as long as Europe remained divided; at Helsinki, this policy was in effect abandoned. The nation that sponsors Radio Free Europe and observes Captive Nations' Week thereby informed the citizens of Poland, East Germany, Latvia, Estonia, Rumania, and all the rest that their governments were perfectly legitimate as far as we were concerned, thank you. So much for the Cold War and, to use the quietly derisive phrase of *Newsweek* (August 11, 1975), "what some still called the Iron Curtain."

But why is all this that important? Soviet domination of Eastern Europe is, after all, a *fait accompli*. No one suggests that there is anything dramatic the United States will (or, possibly, can) do about it; no one anticipates a successful counterrevolution in the foreseeable future in any of the satellite states. So isn't it just as well to recognize reality? What possible harm can come from Helsinki?

While one anticipates that Helsinki will be defended in precisely such terms, there are at least three things wrong with this deceptively simple, straightforward, seeming *Realpolitik* approach to our recent activities in Finland. The first is that it pays no heed to the importance of the moral posture of American foreign policy. We are not, it is true, in a position to substitute the type of government which reasonable men, sensitive to human freedom and dignity, would prefer for the various Worker's Paradises that currently envelop the Eastern European scene. And in that context it may well be the wiser course to maintain formal relations and communication with those regimes. But it is quite another thing solemnly to bless Communist (and in many ways Soviet) hegemony in this section of the globe, to endorse this state of affairs as legitimate. This last step is at best gratuitous, and at worst represents disregard and even rejection of moral principles about how men deserve to be governed which we have long trumpeted to the rest of the world. There are those, no doubt, who think that our inability to establish a democracy in Hungary tomorrow renders meaningless a posture of official disapproval of what exists in Hungary today. One can only respond that such individuals are grossly insensitive to the potential moral significance of any foreign policy stance that lies between the extremes of leading a counter-revolt and simply being resigned. And our adopting a moral position, let it be emphasized, is indeed significant. For we are not in this business of international relations solely to sell wheat or even solely to avoid war. Rather, we have the distinct responsibility to nurture and protect a uniquely moral vision of man and of how his affairs should be organized—a vision that should not be lost by those entrusted with the heady task of conducting the foreign policy of the world's still most powerful nation.

The second flaw in the "Helsinki can do no harm" theory is that it ignores the impact of such conferences on our allies, particularly those in Western Europe. Granted, these nations were all present in Finland, joining in the dinners and ceremonies and signings with everyone else. No one expects them to respond to our cozying up to the East by going off in a corner to sulk. The point is rather that our posture will inevitably affect their own, and that the direction we are currently pursuing is highly unlikely to yield a positive impact. In part, Helsinki represented American recognition of what Sir Robert Thompson has described (in *Peace Is Not at Hand*) as one of the Communists' "advantageous ground rules" in the international arena: "Communist countries are off-limits while the rest of the world is a free-for-all." Particularly in light of developing events in Portugal, in which Moscow's involvement is only slightly veiled, our sudden grant of legitimacy to the map of Eastern Europe seems fatuous. Our allies in the Western half of the continent have no option but to exist in close proximity to an extremely powerful nation whose aggression we have now (albeit belatedly) endorsed. We

will hardly be in a position to criticize them as they too make adjustments and *rapprochements* in their relations with the East, however politically, militarily, or economically discomfitting such actions may, in the future, prove to us.

Finally, Helsinki makes little sense even if one prefers to ignore its moral implications or its possible deleterious impact on the policies of our allies. If nothing else, ratifying the current political division of Europe should have been viewed as an important bargaining counter in what former President Nixon styled an "era of negotiation" rather than "confrontation." Our position on this issue was apparently a matter of some import to the Soviets. What, one may respectfully ask, did we get in return? The answer is distressingly clear—virtually nothing. We received formal Soviet endorsement of vague, rhetorical affirmations of the importance of a whole laundry list of civil liberties—all of which, of course, will be absolutely unenforceable. Why we should expect the leaders of the Russian Communist Party to pay more attention to such declarations when signed at Helsinki than they do to the similar sentiments expressed in their own constitution is past reasonable comprehension. Beyond that, we got little more than the dubious pleasure of seeing Ford and Brezhnev in innumerable moments of good-natured, back-slapping, hail-fellow-well-met bonhomie, which is supposed to make us breathe a sigh of relief at this "visible relaxation of tensions" between the superpowers.

Ultimately, it is this last which stands as the most frightening aspect of Helsinki. One begins to suspect that obtaining this ephemeral, falsely comforting sense that "we can get along with them" and "there doesn't have to be a war" is what détente is really all about. Judging from SALT and Helsinki, the lengths we are prepared to go and the concessions we are willing to make in order simply to achieve this occasional, fleeting feeling of relaxed reassurance about the future of mankind in a nuclear age, are becoming truly astounding. It is almost, in the words of George Ball, as if détente were "more an obsession than a policy." Certainly, it seems less and less a responsible course of action.

The Soviets seem remarkably unafflicted with similar obsessions in the conduct of their own foreign policy. Rather, their actions over the last several decades—if not always their words—indicate that their ultimate ambition, their only obsession, remains pretty much what it has always been. Nothing save our own wistful and self-deceptive thinking has ever really suggested otherwise.

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn asked recently in New York, "How do you warn a people who have never suffered?" I am not sure how one answers that, finally; but it cannot hurt to recall the 1948 remarks of Winston Churchill in *The Gathering Storm*: "There can hardly ever have been a war more easy to prevent than this second Armageddon. I have always been ready to use force in order to defy tyranny or ward off ruin. But had our British, American and Allied affairs been conducted with the ordinary consistency and common sense usual in decent households, there was no need for Force to march unaccompanied by Law; and Strength, moreover, could have been used in righteous causes with little risk of bloodshed. In their loss of purpose, in their abandonment of even the themes they most sincerely espoused, Britain, France, and most of all, because of their immense power and impartiality, the United States, allowed conditions to be gradually built up which led to the very climax they dreaded most. They have only to repeat the same well-meaning, short-sighted behaviour towards the new problems which in singular resemblance confront us today to bring about a third convulsion from which none may live to tell the tale." □

Edith Efron

Conservatism: A Libertarian Challenge

(This essay has been adapted from a lecture given by Miss Efron at the Harvard Institute of Politics.)

It is not uncommon in the intellectual world for an occasional course to be given in conservative thought—either in the form of a published anthology or a university lecture series. It happens about once every four years. Typically, a conservative is given the chore of rounding up a collection of writers or lecturers to answer that mysterious question: What do conservatives think? Only, for some reason, if, two months later, you ask those who have read the book or attended the lectures to explain what conservative philosophy is, their answers will be extremely vague. The experience is strangely akin to eating a Chinese dinner.

Now, other political philosophies and movements do not induce a comparable amnesia. No one, with minimal political literacy, would find it too difficult to tell you what black militants advocate, what Communists seek, how liberals perceive the role of government, or what values are stressed by the New Left. Such questions can be readily answered even by casual observers. The answers might be inaccurate, they might often contradict themselves, and members of these groups might protest that the explanations are caricatural. But the point is, nobody would stare blankly and answer: I haven't the faintest idea. This is not the case with conservative thought.

Defining Conservatism

This is particularly odd, since there are so many conservatives around. They constitute about thirty to forty percent of the people and they even have a national political party—the Republican Party, most of which considers itself conservative. One would think that such a group would be ideally situated to make known its dominant values, principles, and goals. But this never seems to occur. All anybody ever really seems to remember about conservatism—and this apparently includes most conservatives themselves—is that whatever liberals are for, conservatives are against. William F. Buckley, who is widely viewed as the father of the modern conservative movement, confesses with perverse pride: "I have never failed to dissatisfy an audience that asks the meaning of conservatism." But, he says, he can spot a liberal at fifty paces.

Indeed, Buckley collapses, however wittily and eloquently, whenever he tries to present conservatism in a coherent fashion. He is most successful when—to use John Roche's apt description—he sets out "to smite the liberal hip and thigh," to impale "the contradictions, the hypocrisies, the pretensions of liberal and radical pontiffs," and to publish journals and anthologies of writers doing the same. For conservatism is generally graspable or intelligible only in this negative aspect—in the dissection and flagellation of liberal and radical irrationality. It is rare indeed to find affirmative presentations of conservative political theory on which all or most conservatives would agree.

I began to look for such affirmative presentations when people started calling me conservative. They assumed I was a conservative because in my book *The News Twisters* I had come up with findings of political bias that supported many charges of the Republican and conservative world, among others. Actually I am not a conservative, but a lifelong liberal who, twenty years ago, after growing disenchantment with proliferating govern-

ment, read writers like Ayn Rand, Ludwig von Mises, and Henry Hazlitt, and became a "limited state" libertarian. Since people began describing me as conservative, however, I became increasingly curious about what it was that I was supposed to be—and what it was that I was supposed to be thinking. And in the process of studying the affirmative works of conservatism, I learned some things about the fundamental conflict between libertarianism and conservatism, which go to the heart of what is often described as the "conservative dilemma."

When I first confronted philosophical works by conservatives detailing their affirmative beliefs—initially, in the form of occasional essays in *National Review*—I couldn't understand them. I mean that quite literally. I didn't know what on earth these writers (whose names I immediately forgot) were talking about, and a reasonable intelligence, a background in both literature and philosophy, and two university degrees did not help me. A lot of this material seemed to me to be strikingly hollow verbiage, a fusion of metaphysics and pop-sociology couched in the language of Corneille and Racine—perorations on Society woven around such concepts as God, Authority, Order, Tradition, Duty, Patriotism, and so on. Never were these Platonic abstractions derived in any rational way; they were just asserted as self-evident truths. Never were they defined, applied, or integrated into any system of principles. Indeed, writers of this type often expressed overt disdain at the very idea of firm definitions or principles, and appeared to pride themselves on not having any. What they seemed to agree on was that Society—any society—with any Order, and any Tradition, was worthy of preservation, loyalty, honor, and obedience. After much puzzling, I grasped something about this type of conservative literature. I realized that if I were to boil the content down to the simplest, most unpretentious English sentence I could construct, I would end up with this one: "God made society this way, Grandpa liked it this way, so it should remain this way." It appeared to be an implacable dedication to the status quo dressed up as metaphysics.

The contrast between the clarity and intellectual independence of libertarian writers, and the murky conformism of these metaphysical writers, was striking.

Dissecting the Conservative Psyche

I got my first disturbing glimpse of the applied meaning of these abstractions when I read James Burnham's *Suicide of the West*—a famous conservative work with an extraordinarily brilliant dissection of the liberal psyche. I discovered that Burnham, too, was unable or unwilling to define conservatism—save in opposition to liberalism. But in attempting to clarify this opposition, he constructed a fascinating little test. It consisted of 39 statements of belief which he had selected from assorted *liberal* documents, including the French Declaration of the Rights of Man, American Civil Liberties Union questionnaires, and the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Burnham tested out these liberal sentences quite systematically and reported that most people who defined themselves as liberals believed anywhere from 85% to 100% of them—and that 100% of was a common record. Conversely, he said, people who defined themselves as reactionaries or hard conservatives repudiated 85% to 100% of them—and 100% disagreement was also a common record. Between these two groups, he reported, there was much variation, but to the degree that people consciously considered themselves strong liberals or strong conservatives, they agreed or disagreed with most of these sentences. I checked myself against Burnham's list of ideas, and found the process very revealing. For one thing, I agreed with a little more than half of the liberal statements. And I'm going to cite those 20 liberal statements with which I agree because they provided me with my first insight into the invisible content of conservatism.

Actually I am not a conservative, but a lifelong liberal who, twenty years ago, after growing disenchantment with proliferating government, became a "limited state" libertarian.

I use my own numbering here, but the liberal sentences are precise quotations from *Suicide of the West* (the second printing, in 1964): Liberal Sentence 1). "All forms of racial segregation and discrimination are wrong." I agree.

Liberal Sentence 2). "Everyone is entitled to his own opinion." I agree.

Liberal Sentence 3.). "Political, economic, or social discrimination based on religious belief is wrong." I agree.

4.) "In political or military conflict, it is wrong to use methods of torture and physical terror." I agree.

5.) "A popular movement or revolt against a tyranny or dictatorship is right, and deserves approval." I agree.

6.) "Any interference with free speech and free assembly, except for cases of immediate public danger or juvenile corruption, is wrong." I agree—but disagree with the qualification. *Any* interference whatever with free speech and free assembly is wrong—and I will allow parents to worry about the corruption of juveniles.

7.) "Communists have a right to express their opinions." I agree. All American citizens have a right to express their opinions.

8.) "Corporal punishment, except possibly for small children, is wrong." I agree—but would reverse the qualification. Corporal punishment is wrong—and most particularly for small children.

9.) "All nations and people, including the nations and peoples of Asia and Africa, have a right to political independence when a majority of the population wants it." I agree—and take due note of the odd isolation of the peoples of Asia and Africa.

10.) "We always ought to respect the religious beliefs of others." I agree—simply as part of my respect for freedom of thought.

11.) "The primary goal of international policy in the nuclear age ought to be peace." I agree—but would further qualify: the primary goal of international policy in all areas ought to be peace, by which I do not mean spineless capitulation to acts of aggression against us.

12.) "Except in cases of a clear threat to national security, or, possibly, to juvenile morals, censorship is wrong." I agree—except that I would be immensely cautious in applying the standard of national security, and would never consider juvenile morals an excuse for censorship.

13.) "Congressional investigating committees are dangerous institutions and need to be watched and curbed if they are not to become a serious threat to freedom." Here we are dealing with a quaint historical development; this was a liberal position when conservatives investigated liberals; today, when liberals are investigating conservatives, they would not say this. Nonetheless, I agree with the sentence, as it applies to both situations.

14.) "Qualified teachers, at least at the university level, are entitled to academic freedom: that is, the right to express their own beliefs and opinions, in or out of the classroom, without interference from administrators, trustees, parents or public bodies." I agree. Without this freedom in a system of public education, no intellectual life could exist; it would shortly be crushed by pressure groups and by the State.

15.) "In determining who is to be admitted to schools and universities, quota systems based on color, religion, family, or similar factors are wrong." Again, we are facing here a quaint switch in liberal views. But I agree. So long as it is public education, no such discriminatory selection is appropriate.

16.) "The national government should guarantee that all adult citizens, except for the criminals and the insane, should have the right to vote." I agree, save that people should never be given the right to vote in a manner that would violate any individual's rights.

17.) "There are no significant differ-

ences in intelligence, moral or civilizing capacity among human races and ethnic types." I agree. No scientific information about this subject exists—but if it did exist, it would have no bearing on inalienable rights.

18.) "Steps toward world disarmament would be a good thing." I agree. If it were actually possible, it would be a good thing.

19.) "Everyone is entitled to political and social rights without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status." I agree.

20.) "The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government." I agree—with the understanding again, that the will of the people does not sanction the violation of individual rights.

I very much suspect that by now you know why Burnham preferred to present these crucial test-ideas in their liberal form, and to leave their mental translation into conservative ideas up to the unusually diligent. For if he had been willing to make this translation himself—and to state these conservative ideas in the first person—here is what Burnham would have been obliged to write:

"I believe in racial segregation and discrimination."

"I do not acknowledge freedom of thought for all."

"I believe in religious discrimination."

"I believe in using physical torture and physical terror on political enemies."

"I accept dictatorships and tyrannies, and disapprove of revolutions against them."

"I do not believe in universal free speech and free assembly."

"I think censorship of speech, literature, science and the press is legitimate."

"I do not believe in academic freedom."

"I believe in concepts of racial and ethnic superiority and inferiority."

"I believe in restricting political rights to those who conform to some unstated standards of race, color, sex, language, religion, family, property, and opinions—political or other."

...and so on and so on.

Conservatism: A Mystical Collectivism?

On confronting this list, I began to understand why nobody quite manages to define conservatism. If Burnham is right, and a significant number of conservatives believe a significant number of these ideas—even in qualified form—such conservatives, at least, have good reasons to be vague, even amnesiac, about their "affirmative" beliefs.

The blunt truth is that such ideas are simply totalitarian. And that raised a battery of questions in my mind: *Was* this what was tucked away behind these concepts of Authority, Tradition, Order, and Duty which, somehow, were never derived, defined, or illustrated? Tradition for the sake of Tradition—even if that tradition is enslaving you? Order for the sake of Order—even if you are in the grip of a tyrant? Authority for the sake of Authority—even if the authority is butchering you? What kind of philosophy was this, I wondered, that cannot grasp the primacy of the individual mind, its right to self-assertion, to thought, to value judgments, to self-interest—its right to flout tradition, if that tradition is fatuous or irrational, its right to repudiate authority, if that authority is imbecile or immoral, its right to destroy order, if that order is unjust or malignant? What kind of a mind was it that perceives society—*any* society—as some sort of irreducible Holy Unit to be respected, obeyed, and revered—while viewing the individual as some eternal private in Life's Army who must say Yes, sir, Yes, sir, until he dies?

At a bare minimum, this seemed to represent some sort of mystical collectivism, which places the alleged authority of the tribe above the interests of the individual. At a bare minimum, it seemed to represent a view of man that does not enshrine reason—for the exercise of reason is a purely individual affair. At a bare minimum, it seemed to be bigoted, racist, and religiously authoritarian. At a maximum, it would be a blueprint for fascism.

Conservatism's Anti-intellectualism

I continued to read *Suicide of the West* seeking clarification, and, shortly, Burnham made both this philosophical minimum *and* maximum explicit. He did it by contrasting liberal and conservative philosophical assumptions about the nature of man and society. Liberals, he pointed out, define Man by his capacity to think, hold that there is no higher authority for men than reason, and believe that free intellectual inquiry and expression, education, and plebiscitary democracy can solve most human problems. Burnham quoted philosopher Sidney Hook to sum up: "The Liberal has faith in intelligence."

Conservatives, on the other hand, according to Burnham, believe such ideas as these: man is contaminated by original sin; man is often irrational; reason, science, and education, accordingly, cannot solve many or most human problems; certain races, in particular, are presently less educable than others; the organic community, with its accumulation of concrete habits, customs, traditions, institutions, and entrenched hierarchies, has primacy over the individual; the social cohesion of this organic community is far more important than free thought, free speech, free academic inquiry, and free dissent, which threaten its stability; and secular social goals should be eternally subordinate to moral religious values taken on faith, without the possibility of majority revocation.

Burnham had answered my questions, and confirmed my darkest suspicions. I was indeed facing the philosophical lineaments of religious totalitarianism, replete with its usual baggage of religious and racial bigotry. Indeed, Burnham granted that liberals perceive such ideas as "fascist" (his quotes). But that is not a silly perception: there *is* a fascist-Hegelian strain in conservative thought, just as there *is* a socialist-Marxist strain in liberal thought. Indeed, conservatives and liberals often defend and rationalize fascist and communist dictatorships respectively. While Marxian-socialism, however, claims to be a rational, scientific system of ideas, the Hegelian political philosophy carried to its fascist extreme does not; on the contrary, it explicitly asserts its mystical base, and its contempt for reason and intellectualism. At the base of this conservative set of ideas lies the precise opposite of Hook's statement about liberals—namely, the conservative does *not* have faith in intelligence. Indeed, if Burnham was accurate, conservatism considers intelligence to be largely unnecessary.

My recognition of this fascist, anti-intellectual strain in conservative thought shocked me so severely that I sought out other descriptions of conservative beliefs to discover whether Burnham's was atypical. It was not.

Russell Kirk's work, for example, attests to his scorn for man's "puny private stock of reason" and to his reverance for the organic community. Among his key ideas, he believes "that a divine intent rules society" and that the "leading classes" are those "who have been placed by a divine tactic in positions of responsibility." He rejects, on the other hand, the "dogma" of "freedom of choice" and the view that "nearly every man is fit by nature to choose for himself in all things." The late Clinton Rossiter declared that conservatism constitutes a belief in: "the need for a ruling and serving aristocracy"; "the rights of man as something earned, not given"; "order, unity, equity, stability, continuity, security, harmony, the confinement of change" as "the marks of a good society"; and, above all, "the primacy of the organic community." And similar or identical ideas were to be found in the works of Michael Oakeshott and Peter Witonski.

The Tsars of Holy Mother Russia would have found these conservative visions quite congenial. So would the Pharaohs, the Emperors of Ethiopia, the feathered Princes of the Aztecs, and the Kings of the Watusi. It is the same "affirmative" metaphysics and social philosophy that has underlain all theocracies since the days of the cave man.

Conservatism's Anti-individualism

When I examined this "affirmative" social theology carefully, I discovered that it is organized to combat one central evil—the individual and his unfettered mind. No matter who had authored the statement of conservative philosophy, or whatever its subtle variations, it always added up to a fierce negation of individualism. For conservatives, I learned, the individual is *not* the primary

unit of social life; individual reason is *not* significant; the individual mind is *not* inviolable; the individual person is *not* untouchable; the individual may *not* choose his own values; individual actions may *not* be based on private judgments; the individual may *not* use his own thought as an exclusive guide to his life; the individual may *not* challenge or rebel against society's traditions and edicts; individual rights are *not* immutable or inalienable.

Coexisting Contradictions

But having discovered this theocratic and totalitarian strain in "affirmative" conservatism I was completely baffled. For what was I now to make of the clear and obvious fact that it is conservatives alone, today, who constantly proclaim their devotion to individualism and economic freedom, who constantly warn that the growth of the State threatens that freedom, who characteristically resist all expansion of the State's power over economic life, who occasionally even try to wrest power away from the State? What was I to make of the vocal free enterprise tradition in the conservative world? Or of the growing body of brilliant free-market economic literature?

Indeed, what was I to make of the fact that the *very same* conservative philosophers whom I have been describing in this essay can often be such partisans of individual freedom? Here, for example, is the kind of thing that Russell Kirk says when he is *not* insulting Man's "puny stock of private reason":

"Ability is the factor which enables men to lift themselves from savagery to civilization, and which helps to distinguish the endeavors of men from the routine existence of insects. Ability is of various sorts: there are philosophical ability, mechanical ability, commercial ability, directive ability, and persuasive ability. But all these are various aspects of the special talent, produced by intelligence, which is independent of routine or of brute strength.

"There is only one way to find and encourage Ability, and that is to reward it....

"One of these rewards is the ownership of private property, in its many forms; another is membership in a reputable undertaking, as distinguished from impersonal employment by the all-embracing state; another is the sense of security and permanence of possession; another is the assurance that thrift and diligence will bring some degree of decent independence, as distinguished from the uneasy condition of pensioners of the state.... It has remained for the arrogance of the doctrinaire socialist and state planner, in our time, to deal contemptously with the traditional incentives to ordinary integrity. But they will be paid back in their own coin, once Ability has been reduced to mere Labor—labor with the mind as well as the hands, dull and routine... In the total state, everything may be dedicated to Labor; but with the crushing of Ability, that dedication will result in the rapid impoverishment of Labor, too, and probably in consequences yet more grave."

In holding such views, Mr. Kirk is not alone. All these themes, too, ring out in the writings of serious conservatives. There is not one who does not express a respect for ability, a desire to protect the rewards of achievement, a concern for private property and individual security, a contempt for bureaucratic intervention into the economic area, a condemnation of the omnipotent state, a desire to protect the productive individual from state coercion.

The mystery of conservatism, and the chronic incapacity of conservatives to explain it, was becoming clearer. Every one of these anti-individualist pro-totalitarians is, simultaneously, a pro-individualist anti-totalitarian! All are dedicated to limited government and individual economic freedom! And many are aware that economic freedom is the *arch* pre-condition for all individual freedom!

Given this striking set of contradictions, what then could be concluded about the mysterious philosophy of conservatism? This: Like the liberals whom they so brilliantly criticize, conservatives are collectivists and statists. They merely choose to strangle the individual in different realms, according to their professed theories. The conservative denies the individual's right to think, value, and act freely, save in one realm: economic production. There (in principle at least) he is to be free. The liberal (in principle, at least) acknowledges intellectual and value freedom—but denies the individual freedom in the realm of production. There he is to be a state-regulated beast of burden with the duty of carting the incompetent through life. In fact, both philosophies are authoritarian, both philosophies are elitist, both philosophies are coercive. Above all, both reject the concept of individual autonomy. They profoundly share the view that man is a being who can be conceptually sliced in two—with one half free, the other half slave.

Like the liberals whom they so brilliantly criticize, conservatives are collectivists and statists...they deny the individual's right to think, value, and act freely, save in one realm.

Now how can such authoritarian and libertarian elements logically coexist in *any* philosophy—conservative or liberal? The answer to the question is simple: they can't. There is no rational way to integrate them. In any given mind, the combination is only possible if at least one of these sets of contradictory principles is held, not as rational theory, but as a lesson recited by rote—in other words, only if it has the epistemological status of a religious belief, a dogma taken on faith.

That *is* certainly the epistemological status of the conservative's authoritarian collectivism, the view that Society is a Divine Primary; it is an avowedly religious belief, along with the social virtues it suggests: Obedience to Authority, Tradition, etc. But, tragically for America, that is *also* the epistemological status of the individualist, free enterprise elements of conservative belief. At least, that is the case for most conservatives, if not for the small brilliant band of rational economists and the minority of intellectuals who genuinely understand them. For most conservatives, support for the Horatio Alger, free enterprise tradition is really a vestige of Calvinism. The Calvinist believes, as an article of religious faith, that individual competence and productive zeal (Russell Kirk would say Ability and Labor)—and their result in the form of wealth—are the signs of spiritual grace on earth. The individual must be left free to pursue this state of spiritual grace: hence, free enterprise. But religious belief and Platonic forms of the Good are not rational political theory—and thus they can coexist with the most startling political opposites, and can be consistently betrayed without noticing it. And this is exactly what has happened. The conservative community has long since sold out free enterprise—to the total despair of its members who do hold free enterprise as rational economic theory.

The so-called American capitalist, today, usually does not know what genuine free enterprise is. It means the total exclusion of the state from the economic realm, leaving producers free to compete, subject to the risks and hazards of the law of supply and demand alone. But the contemporary businessman's working definition of "free enterprise" is bribing specific government officials for favors—for contracts, for subsidies, for monopolies, for protective tariffs, for preferential tax treatment, for shelter *against* competition at home and abroad. If the conservative is a government official, his working definition of loyalty to the free enterprise system is executing these very favors for specific businessmen. The conservative commitment to free enterprise has long since degenerated into a mere commitment to cash. Most conservatives do not know the difference. They can point with pride at America's magnificent system of individualism and free enterprise—a system which no longer exists—only because they speak a symbolic-religious language

The tragic truth is that Watergate is a quintessentially conservative phenomenon. It clearly emerges from the philosophical context I have been describing....

that has no connection whatever with reality.

Conservatives have paid desperate penalties for the core contradiction at the heart of their philosophy, and for the mystical epistemology which renders its principles impotent. One of these penalties is the political disaster called Watergate. For the tragic truth—the many honest and morally distinguished conservatives notwithstanding—is that Watergate is a quintessentially conservative phenomenon. It clearly emerges from the philosophical context I have been describing. The Watergate syndrome, with its obsession with order and its hatred of those who flout authority, with its secretive violations of individual rights, with its totally negative anti-liberal focus, with its overpowering anti-intellectualism, with its helpless inability to do ideological battle in a rational affirmative manner, with its unthinking tribal spirit, its blind obedience and leader-worship, is a perfect dramatization of that psychology which is embedded in the conservative philosophy I have been discussing. The two most common explanations heard from Watergate participants were: "I did it for my country" and "I didn't think for myself." This is the voice of the Divine Primacy of Society and its voracious demand for the renunciation of individual thought.

And this remains true, however one-sided and hypocritical the Congressional and media onslaught may have been. One batch of statist authoritarians sitting in righteous judgment on another batch of statist authoritarians—particularly when their specific illegalities have been identical, historically—is bound to present an unedifying spectacle. But the hypocrisy of the judges does not wipe out the crime, nor its uniquely conservative style, motivation, and psychology.

William F. Buckley has angrily—and correctly—denounced Watergate as a "proto-fascist" phenomenon. Barry Goldwater has been disgusted by it. Both are honorable men, and both are appalled by Watergate. They very much resemble such distinguished Old Leftists as Sidney Hook, Irving Kristol, and Irving Howe, who were equally appalled in 1968 by the explosions of dictator-worship and totalitarianism in the elite liberal world. Neither old guard has recognized its paternal relationship to the phenomenon it so detests. Gentlemanly thuggery was not what they had intended, when they preached their respective collectivist-statist philosophies, and it revolted them. Unfortunately, the road to hell *is* paved with good intentions. The authoritarian sins in both camps have come home to roost in a catastrophic manner. The libertarian traditions are being crushed to death by the authoritarian traditions; they cannot logically coexist, in theory or in practice.

The plain fact, today, is that the two dominant philosophies in the United States have broken down under the weight of their own inner irrationality. Both liberals and conservatives have attempted to integrate freedom and slavery, and have failed. And America is drifting, disintegrating, slowly dying for lack of rational political principles calculated to guard individual rights above all else. All that is left is pressure groups and their Congressional representatives, mutually hostile mobs fighting like piranhas for chunks of the public treasure, with the mediating Supreme Court torn by the identical conflicts. The Constitution has become a rubber document, betrayed by generations of pragmatic liberals and conservatives who shy away from principles as vampires shy away from the cross.

Libertarianism's Promise

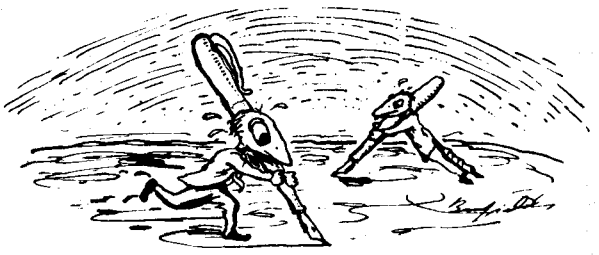
It is my deepest conviction that young Americans, both liberals and conservatives, who are hurt, bewildered, and frightened by the philosophical bankruptcy of their elders, and the catastrophic deterioration of their country, must make it their most serious business to study the works of libertarian scholars, and to rethink the assorted rationalizations for statism which they have been taught. So long as young liberals accept the fundamental contradiction of liberalism—the belief that one can have freedom and a big controlling State as well—they will merely continue to build their own socialist-totalitarian prison, and, helplessly cry out in rage against their vanishing liberty. So long as young conservatives accept the fundamental contradiction of conservatism—the belief that one can have value-authoritarianism and freedom too—they face only two possible futures, both of them tragic: They will march toward cultural extinction—or toward fascism. Indeed, if they want a future at all, young conservatives must take their own libertarian tradition seriously. When they do, they will extricate themselves from their presently untenable position—that of blindly conserving authority, tradition, and order in a state moving fast toward socialism. They will become radicals, intent on a drastic reformation of their society.

It is crucial, in this connection, that the religious young understand clearly that the radicalism of the libertarian position requires no renunciation of religion. In a free society, the individual is free to interpret the universe as he wills, and to join or preserve the religious institutions he cherishes. Libertarianism only requires a complete acceptance of intellectual liberty, and the separation of Church and State. But this means: a conscious repudiation of *theocracy*, explicit and implicit. It means: a total renunciation of any attempt to coerce others by law into submission to one's own religious, ethical, or sexual views. Preaching, teaching, criticism, moral pressure, cooperative voluntary organization, economic boycotts—all are acceptable means of influencing one's fellow citizens. Force is not. Libertarianism forbids the use of force on people who have not, themselves, initiated the use of force.

It is, in fact, the libertarian position on government force which makes it the most radical philosophy in America today. Libertarianism honors *both* the liberals' and the conservatives' most fundamental traditions of freedom, those which forbid the use of government coercion against individuals. It integrates both traditions—the liberal's spiritual laissez-faire and the conservative's material laissez-faire—into one consistent system. But to take both liberals and conservatives at their respective words about individual freedom is as radical an action as can be conceived. Inevitably, the most common responses in both groups to this libertarian integration are incomprehension, hostility, and hysteria. One can well understand why. In a genuinely free society, ninety percent of all liberal and conservative political action would cease. Shorn of their "right" to use brute force against peaceful men who have committed no crimes, liberals and conservatives would be left, disarmed, facing the true meaning of the freedom in which both claim to believe: *Hands Off People.*

For two hundred years, American thinkers and politicians have talked piously about the inalienable individual right to liberty. Few have ever meant a word of it. And with each successive generation, they have increasingly forgotten the meaning of the concept and continued to fight merely over which *aspect* of the individual to enslave, and how much. During this particular season of America's decline, "rights" tend to mean, on the Left, the right to the foulest and most nihilistic forms of self-expression, and the right to other people's money, while, on the Right, they tend to mean the right to muzzle the foul-mouthed and nihilist, and to hold on to one's money. The very level and content of the battle is contemptible. But the inalienable right to liberty is mankind's—and America's—flaming political ideal. It cannot be allowed to degenerate into the grunting of pigs, and to perish. It is time for the betrayed young of this generation to launch a philosophical crusade to resurrect and restore that ideal. □

Among the Intellectualoids



by Stephen R. Maloney

A Dim View from the Penthouse

(One of civilized man's eternal misconceptions is that the barbarian always rides a charger and whoops for blood, a head impaled on his spear, flies buzzing about his disheveled noodle. This is far from the mark, but as misconceptions go it has amazing stamina.

In the 1920s civilized Americans discovered that the barbarian was often a go-getter Rotarian, a 100-percenter, or a hayseed Luddite, when he was not a man of the cloth launching tirades against the cocktail and sermonizing on the essential sinfulness of the Ford.

And so today have we learned that liberty may be scotched at any time, from any direction, by an biped? Not at all. We still wage war against a pitiful band of fundamentalists, boosters, and middle brows, fearing that at any moment a furious reaction against progress and putative liberality is going to come roaring out of Arkansas. In the meantime the barbarian, mimicking the ways of yesteryear's progressives and civil libertarians, is turning our civilized order into a shambles and continually snipping at the Bill of Rights.

Today's barbarian is the intellectualoid, the solemn purveyor of half-baked notions of enlightenment which, upon closer scrutiny, always appear as the purest voodoo. Post-industrial society crawls with these barbarians. Their pretensions to intellectuality and virtue are boundless. And always just beneath their fragile veneer of learning grunts the primitive mind of a Vandal. So where can you find them, what do they look like, what are the fauna and flora of their range?

In this series The Alternative *will undertake yet another public service for its readers. We shall exhibit the various activities, disguises, and personalities of this modern barbarian. We shall at times identify particularly odious intellectualoids and plumb the depths of their fatuities. At times this will make for highly amusing reading, but—even in the archest moment—the reader must remember that—no matter how ridiculous the claims and misadventures of the intellectualoid—the intellectualoid is, down deep, as dangerous to the civilized order as yesterday's Ku Kluxer and as dangerous to liberty as the votary of Prohibition. He is eternally a philistine, a fraud, and a scoundrel.*—RET,jr)

Among the contemporary girlie magazines, *Penthouse* is only number two. But unlike Avis, this glossy gawk sheet does not try harder. It doesn't have to; it is an Edsel with buyers in a society that is all eyes. Like the other purveyors of such offerings (*Oui*, *Rogue*, *Gallery*, etc.), *Penthouse* is an unashamed imitator of *Playboy*. The success of these publications grows out of what we might call the Iron Law of Voyeurism: one can occupy himself ogling the Playmates and assorted bunnies in *Playboy* for at most a few hours. How is one to waste the rest of his time? The saturation point for *Playboy* imitators will probably be reached when they total about thirty, the number of days in an average month. Then the "readers" can begin again. Publishers of the girlies know, of course, that such magazines do not live by color pictures alone—there must be a text of sorts, lest mammaries, derrieres, yea even pudenda, become boring through repetition. To be sure, very few people actually read those tendentious, but oh so chic, pontifications by John Kenneth Galbraith and Garry Wills in *Playboy* and its brethren. *Playboy* admittedly has its moments; *Penthouse* is lucky if it manages a few seconds. "The International Magazine for Men" (*Penthouse*'s humble self-description) is, one suspects, directed to the downwardly mobile, people who lie on advertising questionnaires, those who have never loved intensely—only lost. So as Joan Rivers remarked when Johnny Carson informed her that "modern psychology" teaches us that a woman reaches her sexual prime at age 37: "Yeah, but nobody cares." *Penthouse*'s worldwide circulation is 5,350,000. Somebody cares. In fact, it may be *Penthouse* tells us more about the real meaning of the sexual revolution than do all the earnest participants in academic (and girlie magazine) symposia. For even if, as I suspect, *Penthouse* is not much *read*, it is much looked-at—the ads as well as the pictures—and a picture is worth, in this case, five million buyers at $1.25 a head.

T.S. Eliot once spoke about those authors who become confident enough to transcend mere allusion and to steal outright from their predecessors. In quality *Penthouse* is to its prototype as the "Before" picture is to the "After." But that is only a metaphoric claim to priority over *Playboy*. *Penthouse* has its key, its nude centerfolds ("Pets"), its advice column (by hooker-philosopher Xaviera Hollander), its endless letters section (more about this later), even a club of sorts (albeit no clubhouse): the "*Penthouse*/*Viva* Leisure Club." (*Viva* is a spinoff from *Penthouse*; it is a "boylie" magazine, breasts and vulvae being replaced by hairy chests and quiescent penises. It is, incredibly, more banal than its sire.) The "Leisure Club" is, one infers, sort of a raunchy version of the Arthur Murray clubs, suggesting—one doubts delivering—an occasional group grope for Mature Adults. Cost is $25 for singles, $32 for two, if *Penthouse* readers have a friend that is. In format *Penthouse* is perhaps best described as *Playboy* after arteriosclerosis: short reviews, inept articles on fashionable topics, unfunny cartoons, leering advertisements directed toward dirty old men who fancy themselves fashionable lechers, oodles of questionable advice to the hung-up. Hefner could sue. But it would be a little like John Wayne naming Mickey Rooney as a co-respondent.

Penthouse's one claim to originality among the slick girlies is its introduction of pubic hair. *Playboy*, not devoid of kinks, had a thing about hair, leaving portrayals of its genital manifestations to the magazines one purchased in decayed tobacco shops from grizzled men with nicotine-stained hands. But after *Penthouse* lifted the veil, so to speak, *Playboy* had to follow. And all those fabled airbrushes, the cameraman's depilatory, went into the trashcan. Now a self-respecting man's magazine would no more think of displaying a naked girl *sans* pubic hair than Julia Child would of cooking without wine.

The man responsible for this breakthrough is *Penthouse*'s Hefner of sorts, Bob Guccione. He is a more attractive kind of Hefner, considered superficially. Less visible publicly, without the logorrheic paeans to his own studhood, without the pleasure grotto, certainly without closed-circuit television equipment to monitor erotic movements in his pad. (Yes, friends, Mike Royko broke the story: Hefner videotapes posteriors in action for posterity. Poor Barbi Benton, Hugh's playmate; first she appears on "Hee Haw," now she stars in Hefner's re-runs. But after all, he did vow to make her an actress.) Mr. Guccione does possess at least a tad of the Hefnerian megalomania, however. He is founder, original editor, president, chairman of the board,

and—eat your heart out, Hugh—chief photographer of *Penthouse*.

Under Mr. Guccione the magazine has taken up the Cause-of-the-Month liberalism we associate with *Playboy*, which demonstrated that dirty pictures and attacks on the free market were unbeatable money-makers. The February 1975 *Penthouse* asks: "Will Aerosol Cans Destroy Us All?" (Not if airbrushes couldn't, the irreverent reader replies.) In any case, since *Penthouse* contains a half-dozen or so aerosol spray ads we see that it does not let ideology stand in the way of business. We learn also from this issue that Vietnam veterans are in this year, as are prostitutes and their right to pursue their profession without having to do unpleasant things such as pay fines, bribe police, and put in time in the slammer. The hookers want, in brief, an end to police harassment; they seek only a peace with honor.

Still on the political front, Karl Hess, who in another incarnation wrote speeches for Barry Goldwater, informs us in an essay that "Americans Hate Politicians," a piece typical of *Penthouse*'s prose offerings. Hess, it seems, toured America asking people what they thought of politicians, an activity equivalent to asking Baptist preachers how they feel about sin. Answers (in paraphrase): "They're all crooks." "I don't trust a one of 'em." "I wouldn't want my daughter to marry one." We get paragraph after paragraph of unstructured, unassimilated comments, belaboring the obvious. Surprise: Americans neither like nor trust politicians. Immoderation in defense of the obvious, Mr. Hess, is no virtue. The article would have been much improved by cutting it to one sentence, further improved by printing only the title. *Penthouse* articles leave one with a new appreciation of Ted Baxter's news broadcasts. In an amoral world, fashion and "style" replace intellection and analysis; like the photographs, the essays deal only with surfaces, believe only in them, in fact. One remembers poet-critic Allen Tate's description twenty years ago of the "new provincials," the self-declared fashionable and cosmopolitan types without roots in any community or tradition, people who, in Tate's words, "begin each day as if there had been no yesterday." *Penthouse* articles demonstrate planned obsolescence applied to the written word.

That journalistically valuable device, the visitor from another planet, would, reading *Penthouse*, develop a curious view of our society's wants and concerns: What kind of enterprise advertises in *Penthouse*? And what kind of biological, emotional, and economic concerns and needs do these ads appeal to? Well. It appears that the kind of swingers (old meaning) that read this publication have their hangups. The Number One Problem is *ejaculatior praecox*, testified to by the pervasive huckstering of an impressive variety of desensitizing creams. Another major concern of the readers is hair, which women can do nothing with and which men cannot seemingly keep on their heads without the aid of various elixirs. The omnipresent cologne ads suggest that Problem Number Three is the difficulty of smelling sweet. Condoms, "stimulating" and/or "sensuous," seem to be making a comeback, dealing with the Problems of unwanted children (remember them?) and/or unwanted clap. A picture begins to emerge of what kind of a man reads *Penthouse*: he is a balding fellow with b.o. who is a flop in bed because he ejaculates prematurely and, worse, uses 25-cent contraceptives. But for this would-be stud there is hope, if he will only send away for the books that will change his life: *How to Pick Up Girls* and, after he has done so, *How to Make Love to a Single Girl* (will there be a companion volume if he decides to settle down?). An added bonus for those who obtain the latter book is the opportunity to learn through the magic of the written word "The Panther's Kiss." What kind of man indeed? One who "makes it" with women about as often as he does with panthers.

Playboy originated a new type of letter to the editor; it consists of missives from outraged readers who are, one sometimes thinks, trying to be the last person to dis-

cover an act of sexual repression in these United States. "Puritanism in Pueblo," "Grundyism in Grand Rapids," "Comstockery in Compton." On and on they go, issue after issue, proclaiming that Killjoy was here, there, everywhere. *Penthouse* has a variation on this form, in keeping with its general uninterest in a non-existent Puritanism. In its "Forum" readers unload their masturbatory fantasies. Supposedly true confessions, most of these offerings are pilferings from the poorly-stocked larder of pornographic lore. A typical scenerio: perfect strangers, she beautiful and willing, he handsome and lascivious, meet (often, strangely, in a laundromat) and immediately begin to copulate ceaselessly and imaginatively. In some versions her sister, mother, or grandmother arrive to spell one of the participants. The headings in this section, incidentally, are occasionally witty, even if the letters are sad in their manifestations of spiritual and creative poverty. Referring to an ear-freak's unusual sexual preference, the head-note reads: "Aural Sex." However, consistent with the general impression of sex being Serious Business, of "lovers sweating palm to palm," as Huxley put it, wit is almost as rare in *Penthouse* as arguments for premarital chastity. An expanded "Penthouse Forum" we learn is available in separate monthly form—presumably for masochists.

The mass of men, it turns out, do lead lives of quiet desperation, even in their sexual fantasies. One sweet old thing informs "Forum" readers of the heretofore undiscovered "erotic effects of enemas." Another correspondent, a New York city fireman, whose thing is making love in full uniform—does he make siren noises?—informs us grandly: "I know that I am not alone at the sexual frontier." One imagines the disappointment of this public servant if he were to be one-upped by an astronaut. Alas, if fantasy flies, anatomy creeps along the ground. A friend of mine, remarking about the *Kama Sutra*, noted sadly that position 74 is exactly like position 73, except that it is effected with one's fingers crossed.

Despite its occasional half-hearted attempts at sophistication, mainly reduced to what-the-in-crowd-is-wearing-drinking-or-smoking-this-year, *Penthouse* reflects at base a rather cheap materialism. In its "Couples" section the magazine features a fine young couple, Jim and Sue; he is a fairly successful businessman (for *Penthouse* that might mean $12,000 a year) and adulterer; she is successful too—as a prostitute. When she isn't on the job, and when he isn't fornicating with her 15-year-old babysitter, they "b**l" a lot. Jim sums up his own playboy's philosophy in a stirring aphorism: "Life is money, sex, and booze." *Penthouse*'s resident expert, Dr. Cheatham, thinks this statement is terrible, which it is. But Jim's philosophy is also the magazine's, although it might add "and quadrophonic stereos" to his utterance. Ernest van den Haag once identified the view underlying pornography as a belief that life reduces to "organs and orifices" and the permutations thereof. Mr. Guccione, meet Dr. van den Haag.

Students of the "girlies" often misunderstand the relationship between our (admittedly often exaggerated) Puritan heritage and such magazines as *Penthouse*. Puritanism believed in the dualism of body and spirit; so, in a sense, does *Penthouse*, although it would probably blush and giggle if one mentioned the word "soul" (in a nonmusical context, that is). The hostility that the Puritans felt toward the body finds its fulfillment in *Penthouse*, *Playboy*, and their progeny. Pornography does not hide its disgust for the body, its desire to mortify the flesh, and thus it inevitably glides into sado-masochism. As de Sade knew centuries ago, the taste for pornography can only be maintained by increasing perversity ("upping the ante," as Kevin Phillips says of *Playboy*), culminating in an obliteration of the distinction between sexuality and violence. The February *Penthouse* has two naked females trying to stimulate a bored-looking beach-boy; will March bring a gang-bang? True, in an age which offers us the films *Deep*

Throat and *Pink Flamingoes*, *Penthouse* is relatively mild pornography, probably not even enough to titillate Justice Douglas. But in a world where body (matter) and sensations are all there is, we eventually come to the situation described by Dostoevsky in *Crime and Punishment*, where God is dead and thus "everything is permitted."

I do not want to imply that by itself *Penthouse* is a major threat to Western civilization; it probably serves some good purposes, for example as a do-it-yourself kit for Prufrock's "lonely men in shirt sleeves." Yet especially in its attitude toward women and its portrayal of them *Penthouse* reinforces a dangerous tendency prevalent in our century. We do not need to recall Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia to remind us that relatively few people really believe in the worth and dignity of the human person. A female colleague of mine at the University of Georgia mentioned that she had recently looked at a few of the girlies; she said, "I've never cared much for that 'end of civilization' chatter; but when I looked at that magazine for the first time I thought I saw the beast slouching."

The misogyny, if not misanthropy, of *Penthouse* is obvious to anyone who can look clearly at the burnt-out cases who make up the "Pets." The girls are not very pretty, a deficiency exacerbated by their struggles to simulate erotic gestures; perhaps they convince the fat man in Dubuque that they care about him, that if he were in the right place they would be available, eating their apples and pouring their water over themselves. Like its girls, *Penthouse* writers are almost certainly rejects from *Playboy*, which pays more money. Whatever the girls get it isn't enough. Naked girls removed from any human context, standing or sitting around with their genitalia shoved out are being ripped-off in a sense more important than the financial.

And it is worse yet. *Playboy* is guilty of some of the same sins as its younger brother, but it at least appears to like women, even if it does not respect them, the obligatory liberal gestures to Women's Lib notwithstanding. Buy a *Penthouse*—and make it your last. Look at the girls. Don't ignore the bags and sags, the fat legs and plasticized chests, the pathetic "sexy" leers that passed thirty years ago for sensuality. Note well the awkward poses: the girls teetering on one leg, or nearly toppling off a hard chair, or spreading their legs grotesquely like a 1930s whore. Contrast, in short, these "poor bare forked animals" with, say, the Venus of Praxiteles; hell, contrast them with the chaste (in retrospect) maidens of *Playboy*'s early days. I am not accusing Mr. Guccione and the other photographers of *consciously* making homely girls look ridiculous. But there does seem to be a force other than mere aesthetic blindness operating here.

The difference between "The Naked and the Nude," as Robert Graves suggests in a poem of that name, is style, another name for grace. Stylization is the homage the artistic sensibility pays to reality. *Penthouse* does not have any style; it has all the vices of selfishness; its implicit motto is: do unto others. When columnist Xaviera Hollander advises that incest can be fun, that the taboos against it are unscientific, the genetic defects exaggerated, she is wrong (as a scientist informs her in the "letters" section). But who, after all, does incest harm? Not the "consenting adults," whose instincts, wishes, and desires have for so many the force that Yahweh's prophets had for the Hebrews.

M.J. Sobran, in a fine *National Review* article on *Playboy* (February 1, 1974) decided that what Hugh Hefner, his magazine, and its readers had in common was that they were "self-consciously tasteless." *Penthouse*'s lack of philosophy, relatively attractive compared to *Playboy*'s excess of same, is finally a lack of self-consciousness. It is merely "tasteless." It will be more than sad if we are liberated from the mistaken belief that sex is "dirty" only to be imprisoned by the even more dangerous notion that the human body is ludicrous and contemptible. □

Robert McTiernan

Taft and the New Isolationism

One of the fascinating side-effects of the widespread disenchantment with America's postwar foreign policy has been a revival of interest in the foreign policy views of Senator Robert A. Taft, especially among New Left critics of our Vietnam involvement. Senator Eugene McCarthy said recently that the country would have been better off if Taft had beaten Eisenhower at the 1952 Republican convention. A recent book by Ronald Radosh, *Prophets on the Right: Profiles of Conservative Critics of American Globalism*, contains sympathetic portraits of Taft and four other right-wing opponents of U.S. entrance into World War II and critics of America's postwar "containment" strategy. Radosh, a former student of revisionist historian William Appleman Williams, calls himself "an advocate of a socialist solution to America's domestic crisis." And the book jacket endorsements of *Prophets on the Right* is a "Who's Who" of American radicalism, including Noam Chomsky, Anthony Lewis, and Karl Hess.

There are striking similarities between Taft's foreign policy views and those of the New Left, just as his views paralleled those of some of his most liberal contemporaries, such as Henry Wallace and Claude Pepper. Taft always showed a deep distrust of intervening in the affairs of other nations, and he feared that after the war America would become an imperialist power. His repeated warnings against getting involved in land wars in Asia have also contributed to his reputation among today's liberals.

Nevertheless, this fashionable regard for Taft is ironic in several respects. One of the reasons Taft advised caution in making foreign commitments was that he was very scrupulous about the need to keep them once they were made. Despite his wariness of Asian land wars, it would be difficult to imagine Taft supporting, as so many liberals did, a cutoff in aid to a long-time ally such as South Vietnam. His opposition to sending troops to Europe and Asia should not obscure his belief, clearly demonstrated by his bitterness over the Communist victory in China, that the United States had an important responsibility to resist Communism on those continents. And most important, Taft opposed military buildups and foreign commitments because he feared they would augment the power of the federal government. It would no doubt disturb Robert Taft to find his policies being voiced and his name invoked by those who want to turn the nation's attention away from foreign involvement and toward enlarging the public sector at home.

The Taft Record

In 1821, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams outlined in a a July 4th oration his view of the United States' proper role in world affairs: "She goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all, she is the champion and vindicator only of her own." This has been a deeply held view in America, and at the end of the Second World War, Robert Taft was its leading spokesman. Despite Arthur Vandenberg's conversion to bipartisan foreign policy, i.e. the Administration's internationalism, Taft was to remain an ardent believer in avoiding entanglements with other nations.

Distrust of involvement in European affairs had long been a hallmark of Taft's

foreign policy views. Before Pearl Harbor, he waged a vigorous campaign to keep the United States out of World War II. He bitterly opposed lend-lease and accused Roosevelt of trying to ease the United States into war. Taft feared that world war would inaugurate an era of Anglo-American imperialism and lead to the complete nationalization of American industry. But above all, he refused to accept that preventing a Nazi victory over Britain justified the American casualties that would result from American participation in a European conflict. "War is worse even than a German victory," he declared to the Senate. (Years later, in 1951, he told his biographer, William S. White, that he still believed Germany had never menaced the security of the U.S. and that a German victory over Britain would not have increased the danger from Germany. The increased Communist threat that followed the war only confirmed his view that if Germany had not declared war on the United States, we would have been wise to continue our policy of neutrality.)

On the eve of the Cold War in 1945, Taft was again wary of American involvement in Europe. He strenuously opposed the creation of an Export-Import Bank and the subsequent $3.5 billion American contribution to the Bank, warning that the enterprise would create resentment in other countries and lead to the charge that the project was merely economic exploitation by the U.S. Taft was also less than enthusiastic about the "Truman Doctrine" when it was announced in March 1947. In order to resist Communist pressure in Greece and Turkey, President Truman requested $400 million in aid to those countries and stated that the policy of the United States should be "to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." Although the President's pronouncements were incompatible with Taft's desire to remain detached from internal conflicts, and to avoid antagonizing the Soviet Union, Taft eventually did vote for the Truman Doctrine, lest American credibility be undermined by our reneging on a commitment Truman seemed to have already made.

It was not until Taft led the attack on ratification of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization that he really emerged as the leading conservative critic of the Administration's foreign policy. Taft favored the basic purpose of NATO, which was to warn the Soviets that aggression against Western Europe would lead to retaliation by the United States. Nevertheless, he opposed the Atlantic Pact on the grounds that it violated the spirit of the U.N. Charter and encouraged Russian aggression.

Later, in the "Great Debate" of 1951, Taft joined Senator Kenneth Wherry of Nebraska in opposing the sending of troops to Europe "without the approval of Congress." Taft felt not only that ground troops would be ineffective against Russian airpower in Europe, but that the United States was incurring the military expense needlessly. "I do not think the Russians are going to start a Third World War," he explained to a friend. A token force in Europe, he believed, would be enough to demonstrate and satisfy America's commitment to Europe without antagonizing the Soviets or dividing the world into two armed camps.

His deeply felt conservatism was based on a Whiggish distrust of mammoth government undertakings and altruistic projects in foreign as well as in domestic affairs.

Taft was not so opposed to long-term commitments when it came to Asia. Indeed, he often seemed to defend Asian anti-Communism with a fervor that ran against his traditional distrust of European entanglements. Although he never was captured by the wild romanticism about the East that seized a great many conservative Republicans, especially the partisans of the so-called China Lobby, he was surprisingly militant about the need to defend places in Asia—particularly Formosa. In 1948 Taft went so far as to say: "I believe very strongly that the Far East is ultimately even more important to our future peace than is Europe."

Taft's views on American policy in Asia, however, were at times ambiguous and contradictory. In June 1950, for example, he had "much sympathy" with Truman's position on Korea, though he questioned whether the President had chosen "the right time or the right place to declare this policy." But in October 1950, Taft unequivocally declared the war a "tragic example of the results of wavering and weakness"; it was "an unnecessary war" by then, and it had been "begun by President Truman without the slightest authority from Congress or the people."

No one was more adamantly anti-Communist or more determined to thwart Communist success in Asia than Robert A. Taft. But in his last, and one of his best known speeches, read by his son to the National Conference of Christians and Jews, Taft warned that a land war anywhere in Asia, including China and Indochina, "would bring about complete exhaustion, even if we were able to win." He insisted that America defend Asia, like Europe, without committing large numbers of ground troops to "continental soil," by relying instead on aid to our allies and strong airpower. Disliking budget deficits and "garrison states," he hoped by these means to limit the size and influence of the military to three million men and its budget to $75 billion. Any foreign adventure undertaken by the U.S., he warned, should be well within its capacity and almost certain of success.

In the long run, Taft expected that the struggle between Communism and liberal democracy would not be a military one, but rather a battle for men's minds. With the armed might of each superpower freezing the other into military inaction, the Communists, he believed, would rely on domestic infiltration and propaganda. While he favored the use of such tactics by the free world, America's chief weapons in the defense of liberty would be the force of its arguments and, above all, its example.

The Taft Philosophy

The perspective on foreign policy that Robert Taft presented throughout his political career, one that was usually dubbed "isolationist," was probably attributable in part to temperament. There was no messianic note in his speeches. In foreign policy, as in domestic matters, his deeply felt conservatism was based on a Whiggish distrust of mammoth government undertakings and altruistic projects in foreign as well as in domestic affairs.

Taft worked for Herbert Hoover at the Food Administration during World War I, and this experience led him to believe that the "war to end all wars" had been a tragic error. He was to say after the second world conflict, "I do not believe that any war can be justified as a crusade." Perhaps, too, Taft absorbed, to some extent, Hoover's conviction that European *realpolitik* and America's traditional idealism were incompatible, and that it would be best for the latter to "retire from Europe lock, stock and barrel." In addition, Taft simply was never much interested in foreign policy. After the war he turned down a place on the Foreign Relations Committee. And in contrast to the relish with which he studied and spoke of domestic matters, he took part in foreign policy debates more as a matter of duty than of preference.

There was also, however, a serious moral and philosophical basis for his views. In the first place, Taft was a nationalist in the best sense of that word. One of the chief duties of an American statesman, he believed, was to protect and preserve *American* lives and *American* liberty. Second, his hatred of war was intense (his wife in fact was a pacifist), and he approved of practically any course of action that would safeguard peace. The horrors of modern war, which he called "murder by machine," were especially abhorrent to him, and he believed they could not be justified by a desire to bring

freedom to others across the globe. "War should never be undertaken or seriously risked except to protect American liberty," he wrote.

Taft was also concerned that military spending would result in a destructive inflation and divert funds from needed social welfare measures. He was not being insincere in expressing this apprehension. Despite his distaste for the New Deal and federal bureaucracies, Taft recognized a role for the federal government in helping to provide a minimum standard of living for all citizens. He also vigorously advocated public housing and federal aid to education, even in the face of the disapproval of many of his supporters.

One of Taft's greatest fears was that the U.S., in its zeal to spread democracy throughout the world, might instead become an imperialist power spreading injustice and resentment. At its worst, this imperialism could lead to the use of war as "an instrument of public policy rather than its last resort." Taft returned to this theme repeatedly throughout the postwar period. Only America's persuasiveness and example would spread freedom. Containment, he said, was only a "negative program." But Taft's most wide-ranging attack on the potential for American imperialism focused on Henry Luce's dream for an "American Century": "It is based on the theory that we know better what is good for the world than the world itself. It assumes that we are always right and that anyone who disagrees with us is wrong. It reminds me of the idealism of the bureaucrats in Washington who want to regulate the lives of every American along the lines that the bureaucrats think best for them... Other people simply do not like to be dominated, and we would be in the same position of suppressing rebellions by force in which the British found themselves during the nineteenth century."

He distrusted even the Anglo-American alliance that had faced up to Hitler, fearing that the coalition would spark vast rearmament and clothe militarism with a new respectability: "Our fingers will be in every pie. Our military forces will work with our commercial forces to obtain as much of the world trade as we can lay our hands on. We will occupy all the strategic points in the world and try to maintain a force so preponderant that none shall dare attack us. How long can nations restrain themselves from using such force with just as little of the aggressiveness of Germany and Japan... Potential power over other nations, however benevolent its purpose, leads inevitably to imperialism."

Nor did Taft like alliance politics or the balance of power concept. His constitutional strict constructionism and his courageous rejection of the Nuremberg trials (on the grounds that they were an application of *ex post facto* law) showed his reverance for rule of law. Only with the rule of international law, and the adjudication of disputes by an impartial world tribunal, he believed, could international justice, as well as peace and security for the U.S., be achieved. The U.N. Charter was not an adequate substitute, in Taft's view. Submitting international disputes to the Security Council and the General Assembly turned questions of justice into ones of politics and power. At best, the U.N. was a "diplomatic weapon."

It is ironic that Taft, who had displayed a distrust of foreign crusades and international idealism from the days of the First World War, would put forth such a naive solution to postwar problems. Surely, he did not expect Communist governments to abide by the decisions of a world court voluntarily. He found the very idea of a world state repugnant. And considering his fierce insistence on an independent American course in world affairs, it is unlikely that he thought that the United States should commit itself in advance to war for the purpose of enforcing such a court's decisions. It is startling to find the cautious, pragmatic Taft making such a matchlessly impractical and idealistic proposal. Perhaps it was made in desperation in order to provide some alternative to the onslaught of the power politics that Taft foresaw and dreaded.

His most basic reason for resisting activism in foreign affairs was his belief that it would lead inevitably to an increase of government power over the individual.

Taft is perhaps most famous for jealously guarding the prerogatives of Congress, particularly the war-making power, against the encroachments of the executive branch. This, for him, was not merely a partisan position, but a deep faith. Congressional government was to Taft synonymous with rule of law. The President was an administrator, and rule by executive order was arbitrary and unjust. Taft's opposition to broad Presidential power to curb labor abuses is ample evidence of his consistency on the subject.

Taft never believed that the President should be immune to criticism in foreign policy matters, even during war-time. "Criticism in time of war," he said after Pearl Harbor, "is essential to the maintenance of democratic government." It was clear that for Robert Taft there would be no foreign policy "Era of Good Feelings" in the postwar period And President Truman's exercise of sweeping powers in international affairs drew sharp fire from Taft. "I do not think that the American people have ever faced a more serious constitutional issue or one which in the end may present a greater threat to their freedom," he wrote in 1951. Placing the war-power in the hands of the executive was an old mistake, in Taft's view, and made war more likely The Korean War he saw as the gravest example of this disregard for the Constitution. According to Taft's analysis, sending troops to a country under attack made the military involvement of American troops inevitable. This made it an act of war, requiring Congressional authorization.

But Taft's overriding concern in foreign policy, as in all political affairs, was his fear of the aggrandizement of federal and executive power. The preservation of American liberty, he thought, should be the primary goal of foreign policy, and his most basic reason for resisting activism in foreign affairs was his belief that it would lead inevitably to an increase of government power over the individual. Once this power was surrendered to government, it would not be returned, and individual freedom would eventually be extinguished. Taft was constantly wary of threats to such freedom, and during the thirties he even preached his own version of that ancient idea, the cycle of regimes: "In Greece republics gave way to tyrannies. The Roman Republic became an Empire. Medieval republics became monarchies. If we extend Federal power indefinitely, if we concentrate power over the courts and Congress in the executive, it will not be long before we have an American Fascism."

Taft's great contribution to the political debate of his times was his insistence that foreign policy has an important influence, often unfortunate, on domestic policy This is not a new idea; but today, statesmen usually think of foreign and domestic politics as separate matters except for efforts to muster domestic political support for a certain foreign policy. Taft, however, insisted that we view politics as a whole, that we not ignore the domestic consequences of foreign policy. He defended American neutrality before we entered World War II because he believed that winning the war might be almost as destructive of liberty as losing it. Waging war would concentrate even more power in Washington than had been gathered there in the New Deal, which Taft at various times had called totalitarian, collectivist, socialist, and fascist. And he saw the "internationalism" of the postwar period as an even greater threat to freedom, because it would require that the central government retain for an *indefinite* period the same powers it had exercised during the war.

Taft's new popularity with the Left is especially ironic in light of these views

(*continued on page 29*)

Special Note/Baron Von Kannon

An Embarrassed Note from the Publisher

For years my association with Tyrrell has been an embarrassing one. For example, soon after *The Alternative* was founded we received the annual fund-raising letter from William F. Buckley, Jr. informing us that *National Review* was in grave financial trouble and needed immediate contributions to make up the deficit—I believe it was $245,000—in order to survive. Tyrrell immediately sent Buckley a personal check for the entire $245,000, attached to a smart-ass letter (at the time his checking account contained $27.13).

Then there was the time we were caught leaving New York's Algonquin Hotel, a place Tyrrell insists on patronizing because of its literary ambience. It was bad enough that Tyrrell attempted to pay the bill with his Sears card, but the real embarrassment came when the A&P grocery bag he was then using as an attaché case burst open, revealing to everyone in the lobby that *The Alternative*'s distinguished editor was attempting to leave the hotel with 17 ashtrays, four coffee cups, three towels, a meat platter, and six Gideon Bibles.

The worst episode, however, began the night David Keene, Pat Buchanan, Tyrrell, and I were having a tryst with a rather good bottle of Beaujolais in a London hotel. Around midnight the phone rang. It was a trans-Atlantic call from Samuel Beard, president of the American Institute for Public Service, announcing that Tyrrell had just been selected winner of the Institute's award for "The Greatest Public Service Performed by an American 35 Years or Under."

Tyrrell strutted and roared his approval at the news, but Keene, Buchanan, and I were mortified. Imagine, the editor of the most irresponsible journal in America cited for his *public service*! Chosen by a panel of 70 distinguished people headed by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis! A panel which also chose two darlings of the Morally Committed, Katharine Graham and Peter Rodino, as winners in other categories!

My embarrassment increased when I learned that Tyrrell would travel to Washington to receive his award in the Old Supreme Court Chamber. People attending the ceremony would include such respected members of The Establishment as Secretary of the Treasury Simon, Attorney General Levi, Agriculture Secretary Butz, a dozen Congressmen and Senators, and representatives of the Washington Press Corps.

Well, despite the respectable audience, the august surroundings, and the public-spirited and highfalutin rhetoric of the other award winners, I am pleased to report that Tyrrell behaved as one might have expected. I quote for you his acceptance speech:

***

I am very grateful to the American Institute for Public Service and especially to my fellow poet Mr. Muhammad Ali for recognizing my public service. (*Note: Mr. Ali is a member of the 70-person Board of Selectors which chose Tyrrell.*)

But I accept this annual award in the same state of astonishment that Mr. Ralph Nader might experience upon being informed that he had just been made Chairman of the Board of General Motors. Sometimes I get the feeling that Mr. Nader's innovations at General Motors might consist of introducing into the automobile technological advances like rubber band engines and square wheels, perhaps even square wheels made of cement. No doubt my innovations to the public service are as useful, for after recalling some of my own writings and those of my journalistic brethren I am as suspicious of the journalist's claim to public service as were Thomas Jefferson or Ted Williams. And so if the French Republic is served by botulism at the Tour d'Argent, I suppose America is served by my writing and editing.

Actually I suspect that any public is always better served by its bartenders and its morticians than by its pundits. (*Note: Applause, especially from the Congressmen.*) The technicians of cocktails might spice their discourses with occasional exaggerations but never have I known one to make a habit of scaring the hell out of his clients. Nor do bartenders abuse the enormous influence they hold in this Republic by making celebrities of one another.

All in all I have to conclude that bartenders, and for that matter millions of other ordinary citizens, do more for the public service than people like me. For after all the hot air has been spent it is the average citizen—in his mores, his manners, and his preferences—who decides what serves the public. Assuredly intellectuals and perhaps even statesmen have some influence, but I suspect that by the time an intellectual's views begin to influence the public's behavior that intellectual has long since returned to the angels. Let us not forget that the character of the people is more important to a society's condition than the harangues of its intellectuals. The bartenders of America have consistently opted for a free society, and in this decision they are at once rare and admirable.

Consider Russia. I doubt that the average Ivan has any great appetite for freedom. In 1917 he may have experimented with democratic liberties for a few months but then most Russians seem to have settled back into a secure and comfortable despotism. The vast majority of Chinese seem to be the same kind of people.

My bartender is different. He has never felt Gulag Archipelagoes a service to the public. I am glad to be one of his clients. So I accept this award with misgivings. But I would not want Mr. Ali to hear that I turned it down. Obviously I could not afford Joe Frazier's fee for protection. Nevertheless I *do* accept this award, and I accept it full of the realization that it is awarded not to me but to the many excellent articulators of alternative viewpoints who contribute to our monthly table of contents. They are intelligent and principled writers who deserve recognition, and you have honored them today. Thank you.

***

One might say that the reaction to the speech was mixed: The elected and appointed public officials led the applause at Tyrrell's comments about morticians and bartenders versus pundits. On the other hand, *Washington Post* editor Ben Bradlee was overheard describing *The Alternative* as "a magazine full of cornpone platitudes." And Mary McGrory, the incomparable columnist for the *Washington Star*, is reported to have said, "Tyrrell struck me as a Yuk."

While we might all breathe easier upon learning that Tyrrell made such an impression on Bradlee and McGrory, it is nonetheless disturbing to note that so many Congressmen and Washington politicians walked away from the ceremony actually thinking that they may have met a genuine "public servant," albeit of the literary genre. Fortunately, before any of them could read his speech into the *Congressional Record*, nominate him for a Central African ambassadorship, or name a parking lot after him, he granted one of his rare interviews to the media, this time to William Delaney of the *Washington Star*. He was sober.

***

Question: In recent issues of The Alternative *you seem—much like H.L. Mencken in the 1920s—to be poking holes in everyone's balloons but not offering any constructive political suggestions of your own. You ridicule Carl Albert,* The New York Times, *then blithely label President Ford "the new Harding." How do you see yourself as a journalist?*

Tyrrell: Like Mencken, and like so many journalists then and today, I suppose I am much more adroit in the art of destruction than in the art of construction. Of course, in Mencken's day, the pomposities of society and the pomposities of politicians were much more susceptible to destruction; and destruction was much more necessary, it seems to me, in those days. Today I should hope that I'm not only bent on destruction. There is a need today, unlike years in the past, to affirm certain values and to propose constructive policies. I should hope that today I do my bit in proposing and affirming.

Q: What policies do you propose? Do you have any gods on the American political scene today?

A: On the American political scene today I consider myself an agnostic. I don't believe in

any of them. I think politicians are generally a pretty unsavory pack. I do like to think that I can believe in the integrity and the intelligence of a man like Sen. Jim Buckley, who strikes me as impressive. There are other men in public life who attract my undivided attention occasionally. I think one is Sen. Proxmire. I think Secretary of the Treasury Simon is an interesting man deserving of our attention. But I think most politicians today are at one with Sen. Mike Gravel of Alaska.

Q: In what way?

A: I think most of them are ridiculous.

Q: As a conservative, do you hope for reform in your direction within the Republican party?

A: Actually, you can hope for reform even in the Democratic party, but I'm not ever comfortable with the word reform as it was used in the '60s and '70s. I would say this about the parties—the Democratic Party seems to me moribund, and the Democratic Party seems to me to be involved in continuous civil war.

Q: You mean an elitist-yeoman sort of civil war on issues such as school desegregation, welfare...

A: No. It's almost religious warfare, I think, that bothers the Democrats. The people who call themselves liberals today, like Rep. Michael Harrington of Massachusetts, people like that, I don't consider liberal at all. I consider them radical. I think people like that are taken with a religious fervor that has very little respect for democratic realities, such mundane realities as the role of blue collar workers and other such apparently unimportant people.

Q: What are the opposing religious camps, as you call them, dividing the Democratic party?

A: Well, there's all sorts of religious enthusiasm. These religious enthuasiasts multiply with such speed. There is suddenly an obsession with women, a woman's ideology that excludes all other political interests. There's an enthusiasm with what is called ecology that suddenly precludes any other interest. There's an antibusiness enthusiasm that is suddenly taken up by large numbers of people. Another enthusiasm that has been hatched in the last six to twelve months is this furious enthusiasm against the Central Intelligence Agency.

Q: That seems to amuse you?

A: Well now, the Central Intelligence Agency was created by liberals. It was the handmaiden of liberal foreign policy for many years throughout the cold war period. The claims that are made against it are, of course, ridiculous. When Sen. Church said back in May that it is the CIA not the Russian KGB that is feared all over the world, and this is undermining the legitimate foreign policy efforts of the United States, he was making this claim that was preposterous, of course, and not to be taken seriously by serious men. Really! Do you actually think the average Frenchman lives in terror of the CIA? I can tell you today there are probably many average Portuguese who live in the hope that the CIA gets to work in Portugal soon.

Q: If, as you say, the Republicans are moribund and the Democrats are warring among themselves over a variety of enthusiasms, where do you see us headed? Do you see Ford, your "new Harding," taking the cake in '76?

A: Things are in a terrible flux in this country. But right now I think Ford is in a very good position to be elected in 1976. It wouldn't be such an awful thing. Harding had an awfully good Cabinet there for a while, and Ford has an awfully good Cabinet today. In many ways, Ford is far superior to Harding. He might even be as competent a man as Coolidge.

Q: You're chuckling again. But you would prefer to see whom? James Buckley?

A: Actually, the ideal President of the United States, in my mind, would be Sen. Mike Gravel. Let me be the first, aside from Sen. Gravel, of course, to endorse his candidacy for the Presidency. I think he is wonderful; he'd be a superb choice in my opinion. Americans need to laugh, and they'd be laughing 24 hours a day with him in the White House.

Q: What do you think of George Wallace? Do you find him entertaining?

A: No, I don't. I find George Wallace embarrassing.

Q: Why?

A: Because George Wallace too often runs his campaigns on malevolence—just like Teddy Kennedy.

Q: Malevolence? Can you explain a little further?

A: Well, his campaigns, his issues are so often invidious. Recently, Teddy Kennedy said that health care in America was for the very rich. I think that was his claim. Not only is that an absurd and blatantly incorrect statement, but it's an invidious statement to make. The American people don't need to be torn apart by any more issues than divide them right now. Teddy Kennedy might have his arms outstretched in brotherly love, but I....

Q: You think there is some very dangerous class division right now in the country?

A: No, no, no. There definitely isn't. Only in the eyes of people like Teddy Kennedy, who spend their holidays in the Swiss Alps and Hyannisport and places like that. No, but you keep telling people that they are getting a raw deal and before you know it they are convinced that they are. I think that's a horrible aspect of American politics—so many American politicians run on the creation of divisiveness. If politicians take the American people as they are and speak honestly to them, face up to the fact that they have certain disagreements with their constituents, they would do more good for their country than we've seen done in many years. Whether this would be good for their short-range political careers is another question. They're a strange breed, the American politician. Not a very pleasant one.

Q: They're better in other countries?

A: I recently spent a week in England, where we're editing a book on social democracy, and I was with Angus Maude and several other members of Parliament. I was struck by the fact that even in a country which has so much more class consciousness than our own country, the democratic or elected politicians, whether they be liberal or conservative, at least looked like the representatives of a democratic people. Here, our politicians look like peacocks. They look like beauty queens. I don't trust any politician with a suntan.

Q: What conservative thinkers or philosophers or iconoclasts do you admire?

A: I honestly don't look at people as conservatives or liberals when I pause to admire or abominate them. I look at them as intelligent and well-intentioned or as blowhards and ignoramuses. So I mean I'd have to say that I really do admire Milton Friedman, for instance, and Ed Banfield. Ed Banfield was one of those professors on college campuses today who endures so much opprobrium and physical abuse. Irving Kristol is a man of enormous value to our Republic. Bill Buckley is a great man. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, in my opinion, has done a great deal in the intellectual world I should hope he's going to do a great deal of good in international politics. What he essentially says is to treat people with enough respect to disagree honestly with them face to face, and not to try and manipulate them That's one of the terrible problems of our politics which is destroying our parties.

Q: Do you have any political ambitions at all? Would you like to run for Congress in Indiana? Or, is it more amusing to sit on the sidelines with your intellectual companions and scoff at all politicians as ridiculous? A bright young man like yourself, why shouldn't you step into the arena like Theodore Roosevelt?

A: No, I truly enjoy writing, and I think—what was it that Kissinger said? Power is the ultimate aphrodisiac. I think the smell of fresh ink is the ultimate aphrodisiac.

Q: What do you make of the so-called new breed of budget-scrutinizing, bus-riding politicians elected as liberals? For example, Gov Jerry Brown, in California, Gov. Dukakis in Massachusetts, who turn out to be unpredictable by traditional liberal-conservative standards. Do you see any basis of possibly a new party there?

A: That's a very interesting possibility! I see them as hopeful, and I'm not going to get my hopes up too high. I'm not a maiden in this game. I view them hopefully, but I think they could be even more, have an even more salutary effect if they would remember the heuristic effect that a politician can have on his constituency. The terrible thing about so many of our politicians, take Fulbright for instance, they will twist and turn on issues and always claim that they are absolutely consistent. No politician is absolutely consistent, but I think his duty is to explain why he has changed his position or that he has changed his position. You can see it as one of the shortcomings with Nixon. When he was President he neglected to notice the educational role he could and should have as President. It's something that [Franklin] Roosevelt always knew

Roosevelt explained his positions in fireside chats and tried to get the American people to go with him. Roosevelt was great manipulator, but he wasn't solely a manipulator. When Nixon went to China and popped off in the way he did about the Great Wall and Chinese society and utterly ignored the enormous bloodshed and the terrible tyranny that existed and exists now in China, it was inevitable that he would confuse a great many people in America, and our people don't need to be confused any more than they already are. It's confusing when President Ford gets up and demands $722 million for South Vietnam. Now you know that $722 million isn't going to save that military situation at all. If he wanted to save that military situation he'd have gotten up and demanded B52s. How could a sensible man out there in Wisconsin, Iowa or California actually believe that $722 million was going to do what Ford wanted it to do? Politicians have a duty to carry on an intelligent discourse with the American people—not to confuse people and not to degrade political discourse any further than it already has been degraded. The bureaucracy degrades it so much. The quota system is not a quota system; it's a "goal" system. Why, you know damn good and well what a goal system is; it's a quota system!

Q: What about your magazine itself? Do you make money at all on this?

A: As with all intellectual reviews we, of course, lose money. Unlike most intellectual reviews, we're one of a few pro-capitalist magazines that actually loses money. I get the impression a businessman always thinks an intellectual is up to something, and I guarantee I have fewer businessmen associated with me in any way than the *New Republic* or *The Nation*.

Q: And you're not proud of it....

A: No, I'm not proud of it particularly because I think Schumpeter's insight that businessmen or the bourgeoisie would never be able to defend itself against the anti-bourgeois elements is one of the lingering tragedies of Western life, because bourgeois society with all of its philistinism has ushered in more freedom and more prosperity for more people than any other system. It'll be a great shame when this system fades from the scene, as I do indeed believe it will as long as businessmen refuse to take a reflective view on an intelligent and philosophical approach to public life. They, too, believe as do all politicians that all business needs is a little PR. And all the politician needs is a little PR. Unfortunately, issues are deeper than that.

Q: Watergate did not at all expunge this from the system?

A: No, I think Watergate just gave us the PR to cover up, and a lot more bogus fears. It injected a lot more silliness into public discourse because I must say I have yet to see the tablets handed down containing those great lessons that we're all to learn. I have yet to see the Congress operate intelligently and forthrightly.

***

All in all, I think it is safe to say that by the time Tyrrell left Washington on his evening flight back to Southern Indiana, we were guaranteed that one more city would be added to the expanding list of cities to which *The Alternative* will never be invited to move its editorial offices. In fact it is merely a matter of time before Bloomington invites us to leave! □

Jude Wanniski

The Quiet Tax

Every day of the week the federal government raises your taxes. It does so silently, automatically, daytime, nighttime, and Saturday, too! Almost every politician in Washington who is even half-bright knows it's going on. But almost all of them, whether Democratic or Republican, liberal or conservative, keep quiet about it, for one reason or another believing it serves their interests.

This Quiet Tax results from the effect inflation has on the progressive income tax schedules. At any given level of real income—by which we mean the purchasing power of an income rather than the mere dollar amount—households are moved from nontaxable to taxable brackets and from lower to higher brackets. The government thus gets not only a proportional share of any wage increase, but an added dollop as well. At a 10% annual inflation rate, for example, the wage earner whose gross income is $15,000 today would rapidly be pushed into higher tax brackets even though his real gross income would remain the same. In 20 years, if his pay increases merely offset the rise in the Consumer Price Index, his annual salary would be $103,210, which would put him in the 70% tax bracket.

Similarly, a couple that buys a house today for $15,000 would, at a 10% annual inflation rate, need to sell it for $103,210 to recoup the original real investment after 20 years. At this point they would owe the government the tax on a "capital gain" of $88,210. The same would occur with a share of stock.

When the inflation rate was only two or three percent a year, nobody paid much attention to this government subterfuge. Indeed, politicians dressed it up by terming the increase due to overtaxation "the fiscal dividend." In contemplating it, Democratic spenders in the early 1960s drooled over several years of projected fiscal dividends and spent them in advance on the Great Society. Republican budget-balancers clammed up, hoping to one day use the magic fiscal dividend to reduce the national debt.

By far the most important reason why politicians like the Quiet Tax is that it is political insurance against having to vote explicitly for tax increases. It's a rare politico who will make such an admission, but Russell Long of Louisiana, Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, is not embarrassed at all to say he wants to keep the Quiet Tax around. "When you have inflation," he says, "the costs of government go up, and if you didn't have the extra revenues you get by people moving into higher brackets Congress would have to raise taxes. And I've never voted for a general tax increase in thirty years."

Unfortunately, though, Senator Long doesn't quite understand the problem. No one should begrudge the government its fair share of an increase in income that simply reflects inflation, but in jumping up tax brackets individuals have to yield more than proportional shares of their incomes to the government, with dire consequences to the economy. To maintain his purchasing power, the wage earner must demand a pay increase not only to offset inflation, but also to recoup the tax-bracket bite. If the Federal Reserve increases the money supply enough to accommodate this combined wage increase, inflation is spurred on a little faster. If the Fed holds back on money growth to fight inflation, unemployment results.

With the latter result, everyone turns to Congress with pleas to stimulate the economy, either through increased spending or through decreased taxes. As it did in the current recession, Congress usually obliges with both. But increased spending only leads back to the original problem, for the Treasury has to borrow the money to finance the spending, and the Federal Reserve has to print the money to accommodate the Treasury borrowing. If it does, we get more inflation. If it doesn't, government spending simply replaces private spending and unemployment remains the same.

Because the Quiet Tax began the problem in the first place, the solution is of course to cut taxes to give back to workers what the progressive income tax overtaxed. Congress loves to cut taxes, and everything would work wonderfully if the phony fiscal dividend were simply corrected by an Act of Congress every year in which there is inflation. But two things prevent this from ever happening. First,

Congressional liberals insist on using some of that phony fiscal dividend to finance new or old spending programs that they say benefit their constituents. The more serious roadblock is that while there's nothing Congress likes better than to cut taxes, there's nothing it loathes more than to cut taxes for the well-to-do. Because the Quiet Tax works automatically against all income classes, an annual Act of Congress to correct its deleterious economic effects requires that the tax cut also be applied across all income classes. And because the high-income classes pay more taxes than the low-income classes, a tax cut that only adjusts for the overtaxation of inflation would mean Congress would have to cut higher income-tax classes more than lower income-tax classes. Even mossback Republicans would blanch at having to vote for such an act.

Professor William Fellner of the American Enterprise Institute, a former member of President Ford's Council of Economic Advisers, points out that in 1974 some 52% of federal income taxes collected came from households with incomes above $20,000. He calculates that because of the nearly 12% inflation in 1974, the Quiet Tax picked up $8 billion more from individuals than should have been the case, and to correct for the overtaxation 43% of the $8 billion should have been returned to households with incomes above $20,000. The difference between the 52% and 43% reflects the regressive nature of the Quiet Tax, which works most against people who are in nontaxable brackets, by moving them into taxable brackets, and not at all against people in the highest bracket, since they can be pushed no higher.

In the Tax Reduction Act of 1975, however, Congress rebated $8 billion to 1974 taxpayers, but gave only 15% to households with incomes above $20,000. Dr. Fellner also calculates that the Quiet Tax got $7 billion more from businesses than it should have, by snatching away unrealized inventory "profits" that are only a figment of inflation. And, at best, Congress promised to give back about $3 billion of that *in the future*, if businesses stepped up investment in plant and equipment.

It is as clear as the sun in a noonday sky, as Sam Ervin likes to say, that if this process continues the American economy not only will have no growth, but will move backwards. The already progressive tax schedules are becoming steeper in progression, and nominal incomes are jumping faster up the brackets in an attempt to maintain real incomes in an inflationary era. And businesses are steadily clipped of the cash they need to replace old plants and build new ones. Only the government grows fatter, inexorably expanding while the private sector shrinks. The process described above is precisely the path of Great Britain's economy, and the British government now controls 60% of that miserable country's national income.

Except for stopping inflation in its tracks from here on out, which is hardly a likely possibility, there seems only one solution to this diabolical process: an annual, automatic correction of the tax schedules to adjust for inflation. In the jargon of the economics profession, this is called "indexation" of the tax system. It would take an Act of Congress, but at least politicians would not have to vote directly to reduce taxes of the well-to-do and businesses. The act would merely state that if there is inflation in some subsequent year or years, a computer would automatically adjust tax brackets and inventory profits so that inflation doesn't overtax anyone. Who can argue with a computer?

In fact, Prime Minister Trudeau instituted this system in Canada two years ago and it works beautifully. On January 1 of every year, Canadian taxes are lowered by precisely the amount required to correct for the inflation in the year ending the previous September. In the current global recession, Canada's recession is among the mildest.

Why isn't indexation an idea whose time has come in the United States? There was a brief flurry of interest a year ago, when the Consumer Price Index was taking discouraging monthly leaps. Senator Buckley introduced an indexation bill and got mild support from the likes of Senators Proxmire and McGovern. But when inflation apparently subsided early this year, coming out of the double-digit range, interest in indexation waned. But on the assumption that the Quiet Tax will soon have inflation back into the double-digits, it is predicted here that indexation is an idea whose time is coming. □

Book Review/Paul Gottfried

The Sorrows of Young Weimar

According to the German poet Heinrich Heine, there is "nothing so unfortunate as an unsuccessful revolution." In my opinion, few topics have produced so much intellectual misfortune as the ultimately unsuccessful republic founded by the Germans at Weimar in 1919—and rapidly subverted by Hitler in 1933. While there has been serious scholarship on Weimar Germany (the books of Karl Bracher come most readily to mind), accounts of how "the Germans tried democracy" (to quote the title of one of the most popular examples of this genre) often tend to generate more heat than light, and to be characterized by a certain smugness masquerading as righteousness. I refer, in particular, to the work of obsessive Teutonophobes and grisled Marxist émigrés from Germany, still posing, like Erich Fromm, as the former democratic adversaries of Hitler. Their voluminous tirades against German character—against, as one putative scholar put it, "character flaws in the German tribes first revealed by the Romans"—can inspire almost as much distaste as the Nazi bigotry they purport to attack.

To anyone who has encountered such writings, Walter Laqueur's book should come as a welcome surprise. For one thing, Laqueur rarely anticipates the unhappy ending of his story. He deals with the Weimar period as a self-contained epoch rather than as the prelude to a wholly predictable catastrophe. Although he does discuss the political and cultural rifts in German society that he believes aided Hitler's ascent to power, he also stresses the openness of history. The most extreme racial and imperialist policies of the Nazi movement had only a tangential connection to those views being advocated by the major ideologues and intellectuals of the twenties. Moreover, the Nazi victory was achieved through a series of accidents, some of them turned to Hitler's advantage by the blundering and arrogance of military and political leaders, but not by their predilection for an "Aryan Europe." While Hitler's lunacies were often related to the intellectual currents prevalent in Germany and elsewhere during his formative years, they were, as Laqueur implies, double distortions. As a mass political movement, National Socialism distorted thought by vulgarization; then the Nazi vision of the world was further distorted by the whims and fantasies of Hitler and his confidants once they came to power, often at the cost of excluding the intellectual wrapping attached to the older party ideology.

Weimar: A Cultural History

by Walter Laqueur
G.P. Putnam's $8.95

Nazism, of course, had "intellectual roots" in the Weimar period, but so did a host of other political and cultural movements that have burgeoned in this century. Indeed, it is because of the period's intellectual fecundity that Laqueur seems most drawn to it.

Laqueur attempts to kaleidoscope the intellectual and artistic activities in Weimar Germany that have had the greatest impact on both their own and later generations. Perhaps he achieves his purpose most successfully in examining its bohemian culture. Surveying the careers of such iconoclasts as Kurt Tucholsky in journalism, Bertolt Brecht, Heinrich Mann, and Ernst Toller in literature, and Georg Grosz in art, he tries to evaluate the effect of their incessant mocking of the German bourgeoisie. Most of these cultural radicals bewailed the political and social oppression that they perceived in their own land, and claimed to champion human liberty and freedom from inhibition, yet they took strangely perverse positions. Leftist bohemians praised Stalin while regularly denouncing politicians connected with the German republic. Satirists like Tucholsky savagely criticized German fascists specifically for being Germans, but bent over backward to exculpate French and Italian fascists as the bearers of Latin culture. Moreover, radical journalists who attacked pre-Hitlerian Germany as morally corrupt, presented the Nazis as the representatives of a less virulent form of fascism than that represented by the republic. Laqueur relates such behavior to what he calls the "Tucholsky syndrome," whose victims, like the stormy figure after whom it is named, exhibited a violent contempt for their fellow Germans, often mingled with uncritical awe for whatever was imagined to be anti-German, anti-bourgeois, or, even better, both. This syndrome was manifest in their political statements and even more in their view of criminality. Because they considered the German middle class the main source of human oppression, they championed moral and sexual deviants as their allies in the struggle for a better world. In the process, according to Laqueur, they strengthened the hands of right-wing extremists like Hitler who gained popularity by condemning the "cultural bolshevism" of the Left.

Laqueur has a keen understanding of the ironic effect of other human blunders. In commenting on the reparations imposed on the defeated Germans after the First World War, he notes that "the Allies were only too willing to concede to the Nazis [the cessation of indemnity payments] what they had refused to the statesmen of the Republic." He also criticizes the tendency of Weimar intellectuals "to attribute too much significance to *Bildung* (formal learning)," so that "it dawned on them only gradually that illiterate people could be humanists and democrats by instinct whereas highly educated people could advocate cannibalistic ideologies...." And he quite correctly observes that the Jewish philosopher Martin Buber's mysticism was "more likely to appeal to some Protestant, even Catholic thinkers than to the rabbis, and in Israel Buber was to be remembered as a sociologist (*Paths in Utopia*) rather than a theologian—for which Jewish religion has little use."

The "Tucholsky syndrome"...a violent contempt for fellow Germans, often mingled with uncritical awe for whatever was imagined to be anti-German, anti-bourgeois, or both.

Despite such insight, Laqueur does make some mistakes of judgment reminiscent of other Weimar historians. He attempts to examine philosophical and aesthetic issues within a framework of ideological polarities that bring more confusion than clarity. In treating German philosophy during the interwar years, for example, he identifies philosophical vitalism and rationalism with two opposing political outlooks. Such labeling might be partly justified inasmuch as the ideological Left claimed some descent from the Enlightenment while the nationalist Right appealed to romantic and naturalist thought. Nonetheless, this classification can also be misleading. While such past thinkers as Schopenhauer and Kant were certainly vulgarized and exploited by ideologues, seminal philosophers of the Weimar era, like Edmund Husserl and Ernst Cassirer, were largely apolitical. What is true is that the architects of the ideologies of that time drew from different, and often opposing, traditions of thought. By the same token, however, to view the exponents of formal philosophy (save for the Marxists and extreme nationalists) under the aspect of ideology is in this case to become oneself the captive of a politicized universe.

Laqueur also takes conspicuous pains to protect his left flank. He accuses the traditional ruling class in Germany of "unleashing" the First World War upon Europe, though he never bothers to qualify such a sweeping charge. In one place where he praises the aristocracy and the Kaiser for their supposed "style" he must add to his description: "however anachronistic their entire behavior, however arrogant and stupid their speeches, however damaging their policies." The Socialists, by contrast, are hagiographically presented. In fact, though they were a minority party, Laqueur criticizes them for having failed to take over the German government by force after World War I, in order to create democracy. By cooperating with conservative forces as they did, the leaders of the Socialist Party "failed to realize that there are moments in history when the talking has to stop and when only bayonets and machine guns count." It is hard to remember that the writer is offering a recipe for parliamentary government, and not for the liberation of a student center at Berkeley. Even more puzzling is his final judgment of the Weimar bohemian leftists. After having underscored their political imbecility, he then reminds us that their "motives were generous and their hearts in the right place." After all, authors like Brecht and Tucholsky were reform-minded cosmopolites. If they did praise tyrants (like Stalin) and were exhilarated by criminal brutality, still it would be foolish, or so Laqueur would like us to believe, to compare them to the National Socialists, who longed to have dictators and wished to make war. Although it is possible to engage in such hair-splitting, the reason for doing so seems more ideological than scholarly.

Despite such lapses, Laqueur does observe a kinship between right and left nihilists during the Weimar period. In their common contempt for traditional authorities, and in their rejection of all existing moral standards as examples of "bourgeois decadence," such rebels might be seen as brothers under the skin. Despite the academic favor that émigré German radicals have enjoyed in America for thirty years, it seems unlikely that their political triumph during the Weimar period would have favored parliamentary government and social civility any more than the Nazis did. The Marcuses, Adornos, Brechts, and Tucholskys were as much the cause of the moral decay that beset Germany during the twenties as their rightist counterparts. The threat of the revolutionary Left was not simply that "they fed grist to the mills" of Goebbels and Hitler, but that they, like other practitioners of ideological violence, made compassion and deference intellectually disreputable. According to Laqueur, the "Tucholsky syndrome" has now begun to afflict American youth. It might be noted that the affliction is spreading, as many of the intellectual spokesmen for Weimar iconoclasm are making deep inroads into American culture. "The poisonous philtres continue to diffuse their subtle fragrance." Thus Maurice Barrès described the effects of German pessimism upon the French national spirit of the 1880s. His warning might be applied with even more justification to the American scene as we witness the Weimar Left's jubilant revival among our intellectuals and educators. □

Book Review/James Grant

The Unbankers

The banker traditionally has led a vicarious life. Even while serving business, he has somehow stood above it. Since the Renaissance, of course, bankers have known risk and coveted profit. Yet a banker's risk is endured from afar; it is the borrower's job to manage, the lender's lot to wait. And profits? American bankers, until quite recently, have pursued them with a circumspection rare in other callings. Banking, like publishing, was an occupation for gentlemen; one did one's best for the stockholders, of course, but profit followed duty. Who was to suggest otherwise? Bank stocks were too thinly traded, too narrowly held to interest Wall Street. "Adventure is the life of commerce, but caution, I almost said timidity, is the life of banking," Walter Bagehot wrote a hundred years ago.

No longer. The change, indeed, has been no less sweeping than this: banks have become businesses, and bankers businessmen. The vicarious strain of the banking life has fallen out of fashion. Even as housewives have refused to live their lives through their children, so bankers have sought firsthand (not, as before, through their customers) the risks and rewards of commerce. The era of bank holding companies dawned with the sixties. Somber men in three-piece woolens took to double-knits; foreign currency trading, real estate management, and leasing became legal, even voguish, banking activities. Bankers' talk turned increasingly to the price of their own stock, to acquisitions and "five-year compound earnings growth." Sagacity overcame wisdom.

Martin Mayer's excellent and exhaustive study, *The Bankers*, is an account of this metamorphosis. To him the change is revolutionary, and it threatens the very roots of American finance. Banking has grown sleeker, more inured to risk, less *bankerly* in recent years. Vast changes have occurred in banking law and practice, he writes—the widespread use of short-term, volatile borrowings to finance longer-term loans, the seemingly limitless diversification of banking companies, the maze of regulatory responsibility. Technology has pressed forward, blurring the lines between savings and checking balances, speeding the velocity of money. All the while, he concludes, banking has become less stable: "The banking structure that is now building can collapse; the longer the regulatory apparatus permits it to grow, the more catastrophic the collapse will be."

Fortunately for us all, Mayer is not alone in these concerns. Late last year (the year of the demise of Franklin National and U.S. National Bank of San Diego), the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Arthur Burns, declared that "commercial banking has been undergoing a profound change for well over a decade." Burns found much in this change to applaud. "Deposit instruments have been tailored to meet the special needs of customers," he told the annual convention of the American Bankers Association in Honolulu. "New types of lending arrangements to serve business and institutional borrowers have proliferated." Despite the recent failure of two major banks, he noted, not a cent in depositors' money had been lost.

And yet, he went on, the very pace of innovation had fostered disturbing trends. (Here, one imagines, the sound was heard of scraping chairs and coughing bankers.) "The most significant of these trends are: first, the attenuation of the banking system's base of equity capital; second, greater reliance on funds of a potentially volatile character; third, heavy loan commitments in relation to resources [more scraping]; fourth, some deterioration of assets; and fifth, increased exposure of the larger banks to risks entailed in foreign exchange transactions."

The Bankers

by Martin Mayer
Weybright and Talley $15.00

In other words, bankers are trying to do too much with too little money; they are borrowing "hot" money in order to lend it out again—convinced, evidently, that they can borrow short-term indefinitely. Moreover, they are lending to unstable borrowers and speculating in foreign currency. Burns might well have drawn his speech from the proofs of Mayer's as yet unpublished book, or from a *Barron's* article—published in April 1974—that questioned the financing and management of many bank holding companies. "Beautiful Balloon?" the headline read. "Bank holding companies embark on frantic expansion. Pay big premiums to diversify, push leverage to the hilt, lend with a ready hand."

The Bankers, however, goes beyond the mere listing of our present troubles. A man of conservative judgment, Mayer has joined sound instincts with reading and observation. He suggests, correctly, that banks have had much to do with inflation. Banks, after all, create money through the very act of lending it, and herein lies the significance of the bankers' revolution: banks not only husband society's stock of capital; they *manufacture* much of it, hastening or slowing the pace of business, stimulating or depressing prices. Investment must equal savings over the long run, Mayer reminds us. But at the hands of commercial bankers, the two sides of the equation have become estranged. The volume of lending, and therefore the quantity of real investment, is determined, not by the levels of savings, but, rather irrelevantly, by bank liquidity—the existing balance between loans and reserves.

Mayer is suspicious of proposals, such as those put forward by the Treasury Department in 1973, to dissolve the legal barriers that separate thrift institutions from commercial banks. Savings banks serve a useful purpose, he writes, one that commercial banks, preoccupied with the glamour of "management," might well shun in their absence. The argument is provocative, though weaker for the author's apparent lack of familiarity with the work of Friedrich A. Hayek and Ludwig von Mises. Long before the age of holding companies, the "Austrian School" saw in the fractional-reserve banking system an unfailing engine of instability. (Bankers lent too much or too little, rarely what the supply of savings, balanced against the demand for investment, should have dictated.)

The Bankers, of course, is not a treatise on the theory of money and banking. It is, in the best sense of the word, a journalist's book and its first aim is description. The markets for Eurodollars and Federal Funds, the Federal Reserve System, the mechanics of making loans—these and other financial arcana Mayer consistently illuminates. Indeed, his diligence is sometimes blinding. For the better part of thirty pages, for example, he describes the odyssey of a single check as it wends its way through the banking system: "In November 1973," he begins, "I purchased 42.7 gallons of gasoline and 33.6 gallons of fuel oil from Piccozzi's Service Station on Route 114 in Shelter Island, N.Y., and on December 1, promptly, Jake Piccozzi sent me a bill for $27.33. He got my check...." Mayer is unrelenting. The facts and descriptive narrative roll on, taxing the patience, one is certain, of everyone but the author's immediate family.

The book, at 566 pages, is far too long, and this is its major weakness. There are things in life that it is better not to know. It is better not to know, for example, that Walter Denbeck, a driver for the American Purolator Company, drove his own car (a station wagon) while delivering checks on the night of December 5, 1973. Flailing one's way through passages like this one, it is hard to recall that Mayer is writing about a revolution.

On the other hand, *The Bankers* boasts pages of intriguing detail. Especially recommended is an inside account of how a rickety loan to Iotron, a small

Boston electronics company, was finally righted. The book is filled with people, which makes it at once lengthy and readable. (Could it be that Mayer mentioned sources simply to thank them for help?) The result, at any rate, is a very thorough, and, at least according to Citibank, which is quoted throughout, a very accurate book.

What of the banking system itself? There are signs that moderation has won a new following. It is important to remember, moreover, that not all bankers have joined the revolt from convention. Tradition, the banker's inherent distrust of financial vogue, still reigns—though not without rivals—in Baltimore, and perhaps in other cities like it. Not long ago, the Bank of America, largest of the nation's 14,000 banks, announced it is slowing its rate of growth. Its decision evidently came at the prodding of the Federal Reserve System. John J. Balles, president of the San Francisco Fed, was quoted at the same time as saying that "the cult of performance" must be put aside: "Now is the time to look primarily at the soundness of earnings and the quality of earnings." Certainly, the economy itself will have much to say about the strength of American banking. And one cannot help but wish, with Martin Mayer, that bankers would become a bit more like bankers. □

ERRATUM

In our August/September review of Paul Eidelberg's *A Discourse on Statesmanship*, Dr. Eidelberg was incorrectly identified as Research Professor of Political Science at the University of Dallas. Dr. Eidelberg now teaches at Claremont Men's College.

EDITORIAL
(continued from page 4)

one take this tireless socialist, his eye forever on the infinite of egalitarianism even while his body soaks in the luxurious ambience of Gstaad and glides down the slopes with the world's most trivial and boring people, the beautiful people? One should take him as seriously as one takes the local Ford salesman. Anyone with the economic intelligence of an orangutan realizes that Galbraith's economic nostrums would actually increase inequality while leading us to economic catastrophe, but I submit that if his economic nostrums would lead to anything other than catastrophe he would not be thumping his podium for them. It is precisely because these economic prescriptions are so malefic that he roars for them. Their obvious destructiveness is what allows him to show his defiance for society, a defiance that is a direct function of his hubris. In *The Poetics* Aristotle adjudged hubris a terrible flaw. He was correct, of course; and in America today many of those who urge us to the certain destruction that would follow were we to abscond from our responsibilities are people crippled by the terrible flaw of hubris.

Personally, of all my hypotheses explaining the abominable and illogical enthusiasms of the left *cognoscenti* I find hubris most fetching. There is a terrible arrogance in their line on Israel, a destructive insolence in their animus against business and the conditions of liberty, and a downright suicidal passion in their vehemence against intelligence operations, defense spending, and, in brief, the very survival of democratic institutions.

Finally, though we may debate the source of their perversity, we must remember that their enthusiasms are destructive in the extreme. The destructiveness of these enthusiasms may appear, on first glance, to place the United States in grave peril, and it has become very fashionable to bewail America's dismal prospects. Actually it seems to me that Moscow, Peking, and the Third World are also in deep trouble because of these ruinous enthusiasms. Even the average Ivan snoring away in the Politburo must realize that the same vanities that lead Senator Frank Church to disregard the security of America might lead him to disregard the safety of the whole world. What if some lunatic subscriber to the *New York Review of Books* became President and decided the only way to really reform the world would be through worldwide nuclear holocaust? Nothing would stand against his zeal, and in no time Moscow, Peking, and Washington would be turned into cinders. Surely such premonitory musings are not new to the Kremlin. Everyone by now knows that Moscow was as interested in McGoo's 1972 defeat as the Committee to Re-Elect the President; not even Mr. Brezhnev's craftiest Americanologists could guess what crazy George might do.

Admittedly this is a startling new perspective on world politics. What I suggest is that if those Americans who seem so intent on destroying America gain much more influence, the *Bolsheviki* and their Chinese cousins may join forces with the American Legion. Old Brezhnev realizes that hubris knows no bounds; those who would destroy America might also, if given the chance, incinerate the whole globe. It is a scenario to contemplate. □

SPECIAL STUDENT OFFER

For a short time only, *The Alternative* will be available to students at the special rate of $5.00 per year. To apply for this autumnal offer please complete the form below including your university affiliation and the year studies end.

Gift subscriptions are welcomed. Indeed they are encouraged.

THE ALTERNATIVE, P.O. Box 877, Bloomington, IN 47401

Enclosed is $..... . Please enter a student subscription to *The Alternative* at the special student rate of $5.00 for one year.

(If this is a gift subscription, please enclose your name and address so we can inform the student of your gift.)

please print

Name.....

Address.....

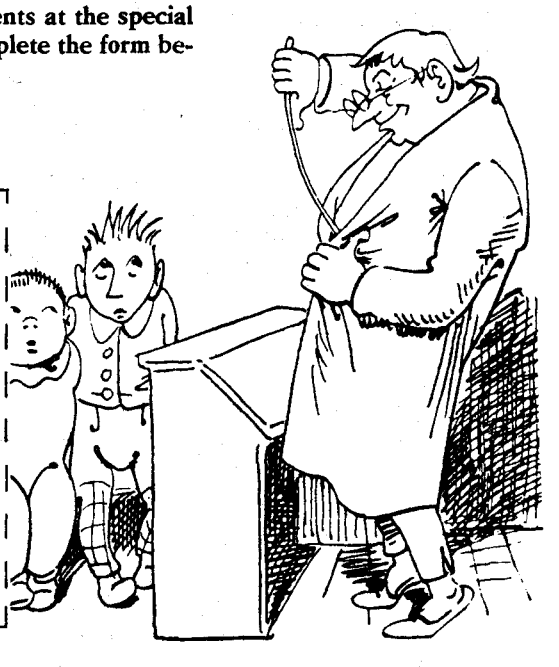
City..... State..... Zip.....

College or University.....

Year Studies End.....

This is a ☐ new ☐ renewal subscription

— — *Please use this form or a reasonable facsimile* — —



The Intelligible World of Harry Johnson

Books by economists on social policy must be approached with a certain caution, if not dread. On the one hand, there are the "factual" books, in which information, assumptions, and rhetoric are jumbled together and policy positions tacked on, in the outward form of logical conclusions. John Kenneth Galbraith's books are perhaps the best examples of this genre. On the other hand, there are the "theoretical" books in which rarefied "models" and high-powered mathematical techniques rigorously prove conclusions already implicit in the arbitrary assumptions and value judgments of the authors. There is no single outstanding example of this genre, for this has become the common pattern of modern policy economics. However, one is entitled to hope for something different from someone as unconventional as Professor Harry G. Johnson, who is in the remarkable position of being simultaneously on the faculty of the University of Chicago and of the London School of Economics, as well as being celebrated for making wood carvings during conferences on economics. That hope is not disappointed in this volume of Professor Johnson's essays, *On Economics and Society*, though it is disquieting to realize that the unconventional aspects of this book are sobriety, balance, and intelligence.

Three broad topics dominate these essays—economic policy, economic theory, and the role of intellectuals. These are more connected than they might seem to be at first, for economists are a special interest group like other intellectuals, and their own self-serving vision of the world affects both their theory and the policy derived from it. Intellectuals are constantly discovering urgent social problems whose solutions invariably require an increase in the demand for intellectuals. Moreover, as Johnson bluntly puts it, their "solutions" involve "seeking to create a society more deferential to people like themselves," so that they profit psychically as well as financially—and all in the name of the poor or of democracy. Thus, for example, an ever-popular solution to the poverty problem is "forcing the children of the poor to stay in school" (consuming the products of teachers, writers, administrators, and researchers, at the taxpayer's expense), even past the point of diminishing returns, to the point of actual psychic damage to the child. The damage to the "student" who has come to hate school ultimately becomes damage to society, because his antisocial reactions to continued educational force-feeding have "the effect of inculcating irresponsible habits and antagonistic attitudes toward authority" which plague him and society for years to come. It is no answer to say that education is "necessary" in a modern complex society; many chemicals are absolutely essential to human life and yet become harmful or even fatal when increased beyond a certain proportion.

The general problem of poverty and income inequality is one on which Harry Johnson has a lot of sound things to say which are usually *not* said on this subject, but his impatience and disgust at the "naive and basically infantile" ideas common in this area make him less thorough than he could be in exploring *why* so many arguments are "emotional rather than rational," and why "superficial and irrelevant statistics" are the norm in discussions of income distribution. For example, much of the statistical "inequality" is between young people just starting to work and their middle-aged parents with decades of work and earnings behind them. But most young people will eventually become middle-aged parents themselves—without any revolutionary new social theories or any massive government programs.

On Economics and Society

by Harry G. Johnson
University of Chicago $12.95

Real poverty is something we can all be concerned about, but the whole point is that there is a vast difference between real poverty and the statistical inequalities which the shrill voices are always pointing to. That x percent of the people receive y percent of the income or wealth tells us very little about poverty or about real inequality in any meaningful sense of people whose whole lifetimes are constrained within different socioeconomic conditions. Real poverty is what we usually have in mind when we think about inequality or when we set up social programs. But the fatal flaw in much thinking and in many governmental programs is the lack of correspondence between the kind of people we have in mind and the segment of the population defined by the laws and measured by the statistics. Thus we end up with such absurdities as graduate students with very high earnings potential receiving food stamps paid for by taxpayers with far less rosy prospects.

Harry Johnson is perhaps at his best in tracing the emergence and dominance of "Keynesian" economics, and its recent political and intellectual vicissitudes. He exposes its central implicit assumption—that the episodic economic problems of the 1930s were somehow typical or inevitable in capitalism, rather than being disastrous effects of particular governmental decisions at particular crucial points. Indeed, he points out that for England these catastrophic decisions occurred in the 1920s, when an overvalued pound sterling brought chronic deflation and mass unemployment. In the United States, severe monetary contractions after 1929 brought on the greatest depression in history, spreading a shock wave of depressions around the world because of international financial linkages. It is refreshing to see the 1930s portrayed as a peculiar decade, rather than seeing virtually all the *rest* of modern economic history portrayed as unusual periods during which special circumstances (the frontier, mass immigration, etc.) "postponed" this "inevitable" occurrence, which would now be the norm except for providential salvation via Keynesian economics.

The technical aspects of Keynesian theory and of monetary economics generally are summarized in as lucid and straightforward a way as their intricate complexities will permit. Still, this part of the book will not be light reading for anyone but professional economists (and not even all of them). The basic guts of the difference between the Keynesians and the "Chicago school" monetary economists is the question whether government spending is needed to maintain "full employment" or some approximation of full employment politically defined by some corresponding level of "acceptable" inflation. The Chicago economists argue that it is illusory to think that a given set of unemployment rates corresponds to a particular set of inflation rates, because only *ever-increasing* inflation can maintain artificially high levels of employment. Inflation "works" only by fooling people, and you cannot fool all the people all the time with a fixed rate of inflation, which they will eventually adjust to and plan for. But if the Chicago economists do not accept the Keynesian "solution," they also reject the Keynesian problem. Mass unemployment is not the "normal" state of unregulated capitalism, nor is governmental "fine tuning" necessary to keep the economy on an even keel. Indeed, many doubt that the government can get the right channel, much less engage in fine tuning.

The intellectual history of the "Keynesian revolution" and its aftermath is almost as fascinating as its economic and political impact. Johnson depicts the meteoric rise of Keynesianism as due both to an obvious socioeconomic problem of massive dimensions—the depression—and to characteristics of the theory which allowed ambitious younger scholars with mathematical training to upstage and bypass their elders in the economics profession. In short, the enthusiasm with which Keynesian economics was received was due partly to a de-

sire to save the world and partly to a desire for self-aggrandizement—a potent and often explosive combination down through the ages. Keynesian economics' sweeping array of strange new intellectual categories created a priesthood of interpreters with a vested interest in keeping the religion alive, while the fact that these categories lent themselves to mathematical and statistical elaboration opened up whole careers to the ambitious young adepts in these areas. Ultimately the Keynesian revolution faced a counter-revolution from the monetary theory of the Chicago economists, which likewise offered "a degree of difficulty of understanding just sufficient to deter the old and to challenge and reward the young." It is an intriguing suggestion that such features explain why some theories suddenly seize the imagination of a whole generation of intellectuals. Marxism certainly had similarly novel features at one time, though its priesthood has long since exhausted everyone's patience with its attempts to see how many "contradictions" could dance on the head of a pin and with its various sects' attempts to be more-dialectical-than-thou (not to mention such declarations of moral bankruptcy as the Berlin wall).

On Economics and Society closes with an analysis of "environmentalism" and its related "over-population" and exhaustion-of-resources hysteria. Johnson puts his finger on the fatal flaw in most of these theories: they extrapolate blindly from past behavior without any allowance for feedback mechanisms which automatically modify that behavior. For example, the existence of a price system means that any resource facing a real prospect of exhaustion would also be facing the prospect of a future price rise—and that would immediately cause a *present* price rise (due to speculation), which in turn would curtail its current consumption and ration its use over time. Actually, practically nothing—not even petroleum—is facing exhaustion in the near future, where "near" includes the next couple of centuries. Views to the contrary are based on considering as "usable" resources only that tiny fraction of the available supply which can compete at present prices under present conditions. Before all surface coal was used up, any coal underground was likely to be too "uneconomic" to be counted by "practical" men, however many centuries' supply that might be. But it would

(*continued on page 34*)

The Bootblack Stand

by George Washington Plunkitt

Dear Dr. Plunkitt:

Who is this beatnik Solzhenitsyn and what should we do about him? He is big with those true-believer types who wanted the President to meet with him in June. But the President's schedule was chock-full of important political meetings with groups like the Junior Farmers of Atherton, Wisconsin, the Schenectady Girls for the E.R.A., and the La Leche League of Skokie. And then he had that session with little Davison Chalmers-Muncazzio, the Boston schoolboy who wrote that moving ecology poem "When Pretty Butterflies Get Squashed on Trailer Truck Grills There's Something Wrong Somewhere." I looked into Solzhenitsyn and found that he was just an egghead malcontent. He caused such trouble at home the Russians had to throw him out of the country, he looks like a hippie dope-freak, and Dobrynin says he drinks. Apparently he is one of those guys always popping off about what's wrong with Russia and never what's right about it. Even Henry was against letting him into the White House. So we nixed the meeting and all hell broke loose. Apparently he is stirring up the immigrants and now George Meany is getting into the act. Do you suppose the Democrats are behind this joker?

—Sincerely,
Ron Nessen

Dear Mr. Nessen:

As I see it the momentum is with you. Apparently some of the major news magazines are coming around to your side. *Newsweek* did a piece alleging that Solzhenitsyn is mad, and I think *Cosmopolitan* is with you. Your real problem is that you have angered Mr. Ford's more sophisticated constituents. The President has got to do something to propitiate them. I suggest he invite Rod McKuen over for cookies and milk. Maybe Mr. McKuen would even strum a ballad for Susan Ford, though she is so sensitive that too much introspection could be damaging.

—GWP

Dear Dr. Plunkitt:

I have finally come across "hard evidence" that the Central Intelligence Agency has for twenty years ardently and secretly been attempting to overthrow the Constitution and perhaps even gain access to the mailing list of the Harvard Alumni Association. Essentially the CIA has been doing this through three very powerful front groups, the American Psychiatric Association, the National Association for Mental Health, and the Associated Milk Producers. My evidence is astonishing. I have taped interviews with hundreds of crazy people, and—a real breakthrough here—I have taped conversations with cows from all parts of the country. One is an extremely articulate Guernsey that actually witnessed her owner accepting monies from CIA Director Colby.

My problem is how to leak this information expediently to the concerned citizens of Washington without raising any more criticism from the kept politicians in Washington.

—Sincerely,
Michael J. Harrington, M.C.

Dear Congressman Harrington:

This is indeed chilling information, and to think that I have been serving the CIA's dastardly ends all these years by having three, sometimes four, glasses of milk a day... You must get this information into the hands of the intellectual leaders of the Washington community. The best way to do this is to leak it immediately to the editors of the *Washington Post* Style Section. Do it today, but try to protect the identities of those cows!

—GWP

The Great American Saloon Series

by Siegfried Weisberger

Beer Sessions with Mencken

When I think of H.L. Mencken and reminisce about beer sessions past, I cannot forget the setting for such occasions. Mencken loved the atmosphere of a German *Gasthaus*. His favorites in Baltimore were Ganzhorn's Restaurant, the elegant Rennert Hotel, and that preferred watering-hole for seafaring German merchants, the Fuchs Höhle. And he was not infrequently a visitor to my *Bierstube* in the Peabody Book Shop.

On the table would be spread abundant quantities of head cheese, garden tomatoes, Bismarck herring, garlic salami, rye bread, chicken livers, and pigs feet. Tall tankards brimmed with bocks, lagers, and pilseners.

Our conversations traced the production of our libations and viands from the soil to the table. Mencken liked to know what was happening in Iowa, where the Midwestern corn belt grew and nurtured the nation's largest supply of pigs feet. He was devoted to ham sandwiches, and he insisted that he should know the history and the ecological roots of their contents. We spoke of the slaughterhouses in Chicago where men of Slovak heritage worked, and where everything but the squeal of the pig was used by the butchers. Mencken liked to trace the links from the Iowa corn to the Chicago butchers to his Baltimore ham sandwiches.

As our sessions wandered geographically, Mencken spoke fondly of pretzel bakers, who developed an enormous industry from bending salty dough. He never tired of discoursing on such men of enterprise as the beer barons, the gin makers, the whisky distillers, and the noodle makers.

Mencken never failed to praise his native Maryland's culinary claims. I recall one evening he read to me an enconium he had written years before in the *Baltimore Sun*: "[I]n this modern land of milk and honey one dainty crowds another year in and year out. When the crabs of the Chesapeake have soft shells, we ensnare them, fry them and feast upon them. When their shells grow hard, we boil them and feast upon them. When they disappear, we turn to the oyster, and between times we nourish our systems with the strawberry, the Anne Arundel watermelon, the cantaloupe, the diamond back terrapins, corn on the cob, tomatoes, Blue Mountain peaches, smelts, corncakes, turkey and canvas back ducks. Maryland is always well fed."

Above all, Mencken craved good malt liquor; he believed that man's greatest accomplishment thus far was the perfected art of brewing beer. He favored such brews as Münchener, Würzburger, and Pilsener Urquell, served in quart-sized *Seidels*.

According to Mencken, the best beer ever served in America was the Francishauer Bock Beer. Francishauer Bock was the beer that won the trade of the intelligentsia: eight professors and ten doctors at one table guzzled the golden beverage in support of its reputation. Bock beer, served directly from the barrel, was most characteristically associated with the spring of the year, when all life starts anew, bringing with it a new flow of sap. Gents and ladies unaware of life in springtime, of bock beer, and of bockwurst remain fools, Mencken insisted, all of their lives.

H.L. Mencken was not a group man; he was not in favor of fraternities. Yet when he had ended a hard day of work and he felt the spirit of laughter, he longed for a beer session. The purpose of the sessions was drinking beer; though good conversation was important, its role was not primary. Drinking beer with a "Beer Bruder" was a great joy for the noble journalist. Mencken liked to gather with friends in beer parlors where men alone guzzled. He was not in favor of beer sippers, kids who grew up on lollipop bottles. Their habits to him were undisciplined drinking and had no place in a respectable beer hall.

At ease in the company of "Beer Bruders," Mencken was at no loss for frankness. I remember many a hot night in Baltimore when he would vent his vehemence against Tennessee and the Bible Belt, the snake charmer cults and the diehards who sought to suppress Darwin's theory of evolution. Mencken knew the Bible well and honored it as a book of beautiful poetry. He claimed that the men who wrote the Bible were the greatest poets who have ever lived; he easily could have talked a dozen mountain preachers under the table if the session's topic had been the Bible versus men. University professors at large were also subject to Mencken's ire. His stand was that universities produced too many doctors of philosophy who were insurance agents. Self-styled "institutions of higher learning," he contended, were merely breeding grounds for cheap politicians and the cause of mediocrity in society.

Mencken will live on, I believe, and his *Prejudices* have made the permanent press. He never failed to touch upon the wonders in this great American land. Biting satire thrilled him most. When I recall our sessions, I can still hear a "Mencken roaring laughter." His concept of the humor of America as manifest in written and spoken language has been equaled by none. He loved linguistic ridicule, lampoonism, and farce; and his poignant use of outrage has been inscribed in the archives of America.

But not all of Mencken's wit was caustic. In the comfort of a cozy beer house, Mencken loved to banter tongue-in-cheek with his friends. I remember that he took great delight in attempting to convince me, say, of the existence of flying saucers, or that he possessed extrasensory powers. Before credulous barkeeps, he pretended to believe that Swedenborg was the world's greatest religious philosopher. Occasionally he would quip about patriotic activities, lodge membership, and piety, waggishly urging obedience to the law of the mighty and faithful observance to petty reputation.

Mencken believed in drinking beer with a clear head, being prepared for song when good fellows got together. After he had expressed his opinions for the evening, he would strike up a song that he termed as serious as a Bach cantata, *reich mit Geist*, as delightful as Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, as solemn as "Missa Solemnis," and as enjoyable as the whispering pines in an ancient forest.

Many a man had to be rolled home to his mother or wife by a burly policeman to be sobered up, but not Mencken. He held his liquor well. And when the establishment closed, we made our way home, our heads still ringing with the stout tones of the evening's *Trinkenlieder*. □

TAFT
(continued from page 18)

For Taft's foreign policy to be carried out by his New Left defenders would defeat his basic purpose. It was precisely in order to prevent the ascendancy of those who advocate a "socialist solution" to America's problems that he was willing to tolerate a Nazi Britain and even risk a Communist Europe.

Conclusion

The tradition that Taft represented faded rapidly after his death in 1953, as John Foster Dulles' "liberationist" rhetoric became the Republican answer to the Democratic containment policy. Conservative Republicans increasingly met the Democrats in political debate by denouncing them for not being tough enough in facing up to the Communist challenge.

It is unfortunate that, in a crucial period for foreign policy, America was thus deprived of an important perspective. If someone had resuscitated Taftism in the early '60s, for example, he would have performed a needed service. A dose of Taft's skepticism would have been valuable at a time when New Frontierism was the orthodoxy of voters, intellectuals, journalists, and politicians alike. Perhaps it would have encouraged an early form of the Nixon Doctrine, and, specifically, a wariness of committing ground troops in Vietnam. It at least might have prevented us from committing ourselves so heavily to that country without any discernible military goal. It might also have tempered our blind confidence in Presidential competence and, above all, the faith that the government can accomplish anything.

The post-Vietnam era, however, presents different problems. After our recent failures and a torrent of books, articles, and sermons on the limits of foreign policy, and the risks inherent in Congressional abdication of responsibility, confusion more accurately describes the national mood than hubris. A revival of Taft's policies today might only bolster the neo-isolationism that is abroad. If we are in danger of paralyzing the executive or turning our back on international responsibilities we have voluntarily assumed, then perhaps we can benefit more from the example of Taft's willingness to stand against the common wisdom than from his policy views.

Nostalgia, or admiration for Taft's integrity, does not obviate the need to take an honest look at his stand on specific issues. In the first place, it is not clear that the Truman Administration's assessment of Soviet intentions was incorrect. The way in which our postwar policy was framed probably led policymakers and politicians to see foreign affairs in Manichean terms and to ignore subtle changes that did occur in the postwar power structure. But to conclude that a policy was inflexible is not to say that its premises were incorrect. And the strongest case for American policy, in Europe especially, was rooted not in Wilsonian ambitions but in the balance of power and national security. Taft, however, probably underestimated Stalin's challenge in Europe, and he overestimated the control that the United States could exercise over the vast area and turbulent affairs of Asia. Although he warned of the pitfalls of a land war in Asia, he was utterly unrealistic in his belief that airpower alone would give us great leverage in foreign affairs.

One thing that our experiments with domestic reform have made clear is the importance of the unplanned effects of government policies. Taft's greatest concern and insight was that foreign policy has serious, unintended domestic consequences. He foresaw that an activist foreign policy would require as a permanent feature of American life, a stronger federal government, a huge military budget, and a powerful executive. Above all, he knew that such a policy would carry a heavy price in tension, dollars (through both taxes and inflation), and lives, and that the price would lead eventually to domestic turmoil. These concerns put Taft in the sad position of preaching a vehement anti-Communism while shrinking from a leadership role for the United States.

At the same time, despite his dire warnings, Taft's view of the postwar situation was, in a sense, overly optimistic. He was unwilling to accept the fact that none of the alternatives facing the United States government after the war were particularly palatable. Taft discerned all of the unpleasant aspects of a world role for the United States, and hoped that they somehow could be avoided. But perhaps, at least in part, he realized that the U.S. could not avoid that responsibility without even graver consequences. There was some justice in the *New York Times*' characterization of Taft as the "Hamlet" of U.S. foreign policy. He wavered on many of the crucial issues of the day. His position on NATO was more moderate than Herbert Hoover's, for example. And he did finally vote to establish the Voice of America and the Marshall Plan.

While Taft was always influential within his own party, he was frustrated in all of his attempts to gain real political power. His loss to General Eisenhower at the 1952 Republican convention was the most stinging rejection of all. But political failure did release him from political responsibility. Thus Taft could criticize U.S. foreign policy without having to provide a viable alternative, and, sometimes, while advising the pursuit of contradictory goals. While President Truman, like all Presidents, was forced to choose the least unsatisfactory alternative open to him, Senator Taft was free to counsel a more agreeable path than was open to the statesmen of his time. □

Not Available from the House of Gucci

Baron Von Kannon is pleased to make an exclusive offer to the discriminating readers of *The Alternative*. For a limited time only you may order an official Limited Edition Alternative Tee Shirt, designed exclusively for *The Alternative* through the coordinated efforts of some of the world's toniest fashion salons in Paris, London, and Little Rock, Arkansas.

Beware of counterfeits. There is only one official Limited Edition Alternative Tee Shirt. Two sizes fit all, if in a casual, baggy sort of way: Large and Too Large. Show your colors: Faded White on Tyrrell Green.

To receive your very own Limited Edition Alternative Tee Shirt, please clip the unique order form, or send a reasonable facsimile along with your check, cash, money order, or food stamps, totaling $5 for each shirt, made payable to The Baron, to the address below.

Dear Baron: I'm over/under whelmed. Please rush me the following Limited Edition Alternative Tee Shirts at $5.00 each. I have enclosed $_____ in full payment. (Sorry, no C.O.D. or Big MAC Bonds accepted.)

Number wanted (how many?):

_____Large _____Too Large*.

Also, please send me _____ Limited Edition Alternative Buttons at $1 each.

*We recommend this size for most men and all buxom women.

Name (please print)

_____

_____

City

_____

State, Zip Code

_____

Send orders, notes, and testimonial letters to The Baron, P.O. Box 877, Bloomington, Indiana 47401, U.S.A.

The Talkies

by Robert Asahina

"Nashville"

One interesting cultural phenomenon of the last eight years or so has been the rapidly growing interest in country music; and it is no accident (to use the old Marxist formulation) that this has coincided with the resurgence of populist politics and fundamentalist religion. In retrospect it seems to have been utterly predictable—although no one seems to have have predicted it—that the upheavals of the sixties would yield the search for "roots" which seems to lie beneath much of the cultural and political phenomena of the seventies.

Director Robert Altman explores these three themes—politics, country music, and fundamentalist religion—in his epic (two hour, 40 minute) new film, *Nashville*, which concerns five days in the lives of 24 characters in "Music City, U.S.A." during next year's bicentennial, pre-election summer. The movie revolves around the campaign of the unseen character Hal Phillip Walker, the dark horse candidate of the populist "Replacement Party" who offers "New Roots for the Nation," and around the return to Nashville of Barbara Jean (Ronee Blakley), the local sweetheart and star of the Grand Ole Opry. The bland political pitch of the populists and the syrupy sentimentalities of country music—which both exploit a longing for simpler times and simpler morals, for "roots" which never existed—are blended together by the Replacement Party advance man (Michael Murphy), who is lining up country and western stars to appear as part of the campaign at an outdoor rally—a rally which climaxes at the end of the movie with the bullets of a deranged would-be assassin.

This sketch of *Nashville* is unfair to the movie because, as with most of his films, Altman does not so much tell a story as weave a complex tapestry of characterizations and relationships: The 24 characters move in and out of each other's lives and the texture of the film in a way that invites our total involvement, but resists analysis according to the conventions of plot, motivation, and explanation.

This complex narrative style has not saved *Nashville* from a barrage of publicity—a *Newsweek* cover story, front page articles in the entertainment sections of the Sunday *Washington Post* (three weeks running) and the Sunday *New York Times*—generated by commentators and critics who seem determined to reduce the movie to a media event. It would be tempting to write a review of the reviews of *Nashville*, pointing out the collective foolishness of Pauline Kael, Judith Crist, and Tom Wicker (George Will has already succumbed to this temptation), but even though the media hype deserves to be dispelled, *Nashville* is a challenging film that deserves analysis on its own terms.

For *Nashville* is an extraordinary movie, and its texture is nearly perfect: It is difficult to tell where the screenwriter (Joan Tewkesbury) leaves off and Altman takes over, or where Altman leaves off and the actors take over. There is the feeling of improvisation in all of Altman's films, but there is never a feeling of randomness: All the sequences are realized within careful structures that make the whole movie more than the sum of its individual scenes—a difficult feat to bring off when relying so heavily upon improvisation. Altman's mastery of the nuances of overlapping dialogue is displayed in two of the best scenes of the movie. In the first, Ronee Blakley lies in a hospital room, surrounded by well-wishers and hangers-on, with policemen keeping out a gang of reporters. The commotion overwhelms us, words fly around our heads, and the confusion of crowded rooms we all have experienced seems captured in a timeless moment—and then the room is suddenly empty. In the second, Ned Beatty stands by helplessly inarticulate while his deaf children talk to his wife (Lily Tomlin) in strangled noises and in the sign language which he has never troubled to learn—which she must translate for him, and which forever makes him a stranger to his own family.

And it is no exaggeration to say that Altman has no rivals—except Fellini—when it comes to the sheer power of his visual imagery. Though dialogue and music dominate the film, the visual aspects express Altman's peculiar intuitive and impressionistic genius. The gaudy haze of a stag smoker, the crushing intimacy of a small nightclub, the sterile impersonality of the (recently constructed, new) Grand Ole Opry—all these are presented in a manner, sometimes stunning and sometimes subtle, which works so effectively to establish the cinematic rhythm that we accept it without being conscious of it. There is none of the gimmickry that calls attention to itself through its own showiness—only the craftsmanship of a genuine cinematic artist.

Yet despite all these virtues, *Nashville* is cinematically flawed. To take one example, Elliott Gould and Julie Christie appear in cameo roles as themselves—in a way that seems designed to invite our condescension toward the Nashville celebrities, who fail to recognize them. The movie seems to smirk, "See how provincial these Grand Ole Opry folk are?—They don't even recognize Elliott Gould!" Yet a more subtle irony could have been displayed by showing up *our* provincialism: How many of the movie audience recognize the real Nashville celebrities—Loretta Lynn or Lynn Anderson or Hank Snow—upon whom the movie characters are based? Altman seems to have had in mind this kind of irony in the characterization of "Opal, from the BBC" (Geraldine Chaplin)—a rude and irritating documentary reporter given to lengthy pseudo-intellectual soliloquies—which can only be intended as a put-down of a particular kind of "sophisticated" provincialism. Yet the role is exploited for cheap laughs: "Opal, from the BBC" seems entirely unsympathetic—and worse, entirely without aesthetic justification. She seems to exist solely to provoke our derision.

These are not isolated flaws in the movie: They reflect a larger failing of vision. Too often, Altman has yielded to easy irony—by juxtaposing sequences (an example is the opening scene, which contrasts the banalities of a tasteless Bicentennial salute sung by Henry Gibson with the exuberant energy of gospel music sung by Lily Tomlin and a black choir), or by exploiting symbols (the American flag, junkyards, plastic religious figurines, and especially cars and car crashes) in hackneyed fashion. The opening, a takeoff of those late-night television ads for "greatest hits" record collections, borders on the banal. And the greatest failing is the ending: It would be foolish to deny its power, yet we feel cheated, as if the only reason that Ronee Blakley is shot at the outdoor rally is to permit Barbara Harris to mesmerize the crowd immediately afterward into singing "It Don't Worry Me"—a song whose lyrics ("You may say that I'm not free/ But it don't worry me") provide a final easy irony, one that dulls the edge of both Harris' stunning moment in the spotlight, and the movie itself.

Throughout his career, more than any other contemporary American director,

Altman has stamped his films with the distinctive mark of his personality, which embodies the tension between experience and intellect, between the material of American popular culture and his own personal aesthetic. When the subject matter—the Western in *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*, the detective story in *The Long Goodbye*—has been accessible to Altman's peculiar sensibility the result has been minor cinematic gems.

The failing of *Nashville* is that its subject matter is too broad for Altman's personal vision. It is unfair to criticize him for making this movie instead of another, but Altman might have succeeded with a less ambitious movie, one in which the complex intertwining of politics, country music, and fundamentalist religion was the subject less of unambiguous allegory than of the subtle suggestiveness characteristic of Altman's best films. Even discounting the exaggerated claims made on its behalf by its partisans and exegetes, *Nashville* is flawed, because its tapestry of characters and themes—which is both the strength and the weakness of the movie—sacrifices insight for irony. Altman's best films have been his most personal—by implication, least accessible to a mass audience. *Nashville*, which seems to have something for everyone, also seems to display a correspondingly diluted sensibility. This is not an argument for coterie art (Altman's worst film, *Brewster McCloud*, is his *most* esoteric), but merely a recognition that even genius can stretch itself too thin—in the case of *Nashville*, at least forty minutes too thin.

Although *Nashville* is neither the film of the decade nor a mine of political and cultural insights, it is an impressive achievement nonetheless. There are superb performances—especially those of Barbara Harris, Lily Tomlin, Ronee Blakley, and Keith Carradine; good songs—especially "I'm Easy," by Carradine, and "Dues," by Blakley; and the brilliant craftsmanship of Altman, Tewkesbury, musical director Richard Baskin, cinematographer Paul Lohmann, and sound engineers Jim Webb and Chris McLaughlin. *Nashville* is a 1975 movie "must"—but the publicity surrounding it must not be permitted to obscure its failings, or its virtues. □

David Brudnoy

Brudnoy's Film Index

■ **Bite the Bullet:** 700 miles around the desert, as eight contestants and their nags set off on a grueling endurance race, at the end of which sits the $2,000 pile of gold. Gene Hackman stars as the cowpoke with a galloping case of the concerns—for animals. Jan-Michael Vincent is the snot-nosed kid who (of course) reforms. James Coburn impersonates James Coburn, circa 1906. Candice Bergen is A Woman With A Past, who's out to win the race for marital reasons. The landscape is breathtaking, individual scenes compel attention, and the horses work hard. The relationships between our motley crew of adventurers are not always believable, and the film lasts at least a half-hour too long, but in the main, Richard Brooks' writing and directing result in a noble achievement.

■ **Charlotte:** One of the creepier variations on the old madman and nympho murder story, an ingenious version at that. Roger Vadim, who foisted Brigitte Bardot on a breathless world, here skirts porn, indulging himself in one scene offering a truly new approach to phallic worship, and delves deeply into the psychological makeup of the jet setters involved in this horror story. Almost everyone is pretty indeed, and the film evokes a fascinated response in the viewer—coupled, as it happens, with revulsion.

■ **Cooley High:** Black *American Graffiti*: the mid-60s high school scene as lived by hip urban Negroes, a jivey lot and infectious. The music is Motown classic, the warmth and adolescent *angst* rings true, and if you remember "Baby Love," "Stop in the Name of Love," The Temptations, The Miracles, and others of that golden age, this film will bring back pleasant memories.

■ **The Drowning Pool:** Private dick Lew Harper (Paul Newman) is back in some meandering monkeyshine about a missing account book, a vile girlchild, a boozy broad (Joanne Woodward), various baddies, and more menacing water than anything this season but in *Jaws*. Newman's eyes are still the bluest blue, his bod's in terrific shape, but the zing's gone out of Harper. Long before he nearly drowns, the filmgoer's attention has sunk.

■ **The Fortune:** Jack Nicholson and Warren Beatty as two ne'er-do-wells who, to avoid transporting a lady 'cross state lines for immoral purposes, transport her across state lines to steal her fortune by killing her. This is a comedy about adultery, greed, homicide, and the Mann Act, introducing Stockard Channing as the hapless heiress. It is the old-time farce, and one of the most sophisticated funny films in a long time.

■ **Jaws:** A fish story, for those with cast-iron stomachs, about the ones that nearly got away. Grand Guignol has nothing on this one for gore, and it is wonderfully scary too. Roy Schneider plays The Man of Reason—in this case, improbably, a resort town police chief—who senses danger ahead of the rest. Richard Dreyfuss mugs delightfully through a dream role as a rich hippy icthyologist seeking the big one, and Robert Shaw reincarnates Captain Ahab.... Splendidly contrived hokum, and it should do terrible things to the summer resort industry next season, in reruns, as it has this summer.

■ **Love and Death:** Woody Allen's funniest movie, about newlyweds (Boris and Sonja) so poor they eat snow for dinner and sleet for dessert. Sonja (Diane Keaton) is fond of Boris, but she marries him only because she thinks he's about to die, which he inconsiderately doesn't, till later. Boris hates war, loves to philosophize, and is Sonja's reluctant accomplice in a foiled plot to off Napoleon, who is giving Russia a hard time chasing the elusive butterfly of conquest. Woody's a film anarchist: his tool to destroy convention is withering satire; his nebbish puss and bloated belief in his sexual allure are the perfect putdown of our standard romanticized myths. His latest film puts him in the front rank of those who would liberate us from our pomposities by puncturing them with laughter.

■ **The Man in the Glass Booth:** Maximilian Schell as an apparently wackledoodoo ex-Nazi abducted from New York for trial in Israel. Schell's performance is nothing short of inspired, and the film is psychohistory on the grand cinema scale.

■ **Nashville:** Unquestionably the most remarkable American film ever. Robert Altman's two-and-a-half-hour distillation of eight hours of film set in the Athens of the South, containing 24 lead characters and two majors stories in a shocking climax. The actors wrote their own music and lyrics, improvised much of their dialogue, and carry a deceptively simple tale of country music greats and would-be-greats, and the second theme, of a new party candidacy for President, to heights of sophistication. America comes alive in this tremendous movie, after which the American cinema can never be unchanged. It is a masterpiece. □

■ **The Return of the Pink Panther:** Inspector Clouseau returns, the same bumbling incompetent ninny of the original *Panther* film a decade ago. This is the best comedy of the season. Peter Sellers is in top form in this merry romp of sight gags, sound gags, pratfalls, slapstick, sophisticated farce, and gentle tease, an elegant, witty delight.

The Public Policy

by Adam Meyerson

Reappraising World Food Prospects

It was not too long ago that we were barraged daily with reports of a world food crisis. International grain reserves, we were constantly told, had fallen to their lowest level in twenty years. Norman Borlaug, Nobel Prize winner and the genius of the Green Revolution, predicted last year that twenty million people might die from starvation this year. And modern telecommunications brought image after agonizing image of shriveled children into every living room.

Today, the news from Dacca and Dakar still brings occasional photographs to haunt us. But the scare is gone, and the headlines and hoopla have changed. The big pother now is whether American businesses have been tinkering with their grain exports. A year ago, that would have been the least of our worries. Whatever happened to all that talk about mass starvation?

For one thing, there have been real improvements this year in world food supply. Had world weather remained as bad as in the last three years, some of the dire predictions might easily have come true. But although the Soviet Union seems to have suffered from an unexpected summer drought, the heavens have favored both North America and India, which expect the best harvests ever, and rain fell on the Sahel for the first time in six years.

Second, with the passage of time and the reprieve from Mother Nature, scholarly opinion is turning away from its pessimistic forecasts. Two thoughtful publications have recently appeared—the May 9 issue of *Science*, devoted exclusively to food and nutrition, and an American Enterprise Institute report by D. Gale Johnson, *World Food Problems and Prospects*—which suggest that the world food outlook is rather promising. By drawing on some of their observations and conclusions, I hope to set the recent scare in some perspective.

It is unclear now just how costly the food shortage has been in terms of human lives and suffering. According to Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) statistics, 462 million people, or 16% of the world's population, suffer from malnutrition. These figures, however, are subject to some dispute—for the study of nutrition is still an inexact science—and they refer to 1970, before the crop shortfalls of 1972-74. No one knows the dimensions of starvation and malnutrition in the last few years; suffice it to say that, particularly in South and Southeast Asia and in Africa, the toll has been high.

But, as both the *Science* issue and the AEI report make clear, the recent food scare has been neither the world's first nor its worst. Famines have afflicted mankind since the eviction notice was served at Eden, and they have taken greater tolls when world population was much lower. Johnson estimates that between 12 and 15 million people have died from starvation in the twentieth century; in the last quarter alone of the nineteenth century his figure is between 20 and 25 million. There were dangerous food shortages after World War II, in Europe, and in the middle 1960s, when India and Russia both experienced serious crop failures. And in 1898 Sir William Crookes, no crackpot, declared in his presidential address before the British Association for the Advancement of Science that "England and all civilised nations stand in deadly peril of not having enough to eat."

During the recent food scare it was widely believed that food production was not keeping pace with population growth in the developing countries (LDC's). Actually, as Johnson and the authors in *Science* show, the LDC's have been making extraordinary progress in agriculture. Food production has increased at the same rate in the last twenty years—2.8% annually—as in the developed countries (MDC's). Only Africa, during this period, has had a per capita decline in food production; in the Third World as a whole, per capita food production has increased 0.4% a year (compared with 1.5% in the MDC's) and in India it has increased 0.6% a year. Since 1950, life expectancies have increased by about forty percent in the LDC's, not only because of public health advances but also because people are eating better.

Moreover, the environmentalists notwithstanding, the world has the technical capability of feeding many times its present population—some plausible estimates go as high as 40 or 50 billion people. More than half the world's arable land is presently uncultivated. And with the spread of Green Revolution grains, proper irrigation, and fertilizer, yields on already cultivated land could be multiplied many times. For example, if India could follow the agricultural example of Japan, Taiwan, or her own province of Punjab—where wheat yields are higher than in the United States—the Ganges Plain could become a breadbasket for Asia.

As Johnson and *Science* point out, however, technical capability to eliminate food worries is not the same thing as economic, political, or institutional capability; and there are a number of structural problems in the political economy of world food. For instance, it does not help starving Bengalis or Javans very much to know that most of the world's arable land is still uncultivated, because that untilled soil is not in Bengal or Java; most of it is in sections of Latin America and Africa where there is no one to cultivate it. Beyond this, there are three major problems which, so long as they persist, will bedevil food supply in the LDC's, and hold back the even greater progress that is possible.

The first, of course, is population. There are often very good economic and cultural reasons to maintain high population growth, and the governments of many, if not most, LDC's have chosen not to encourage population control. But so long as population grows as rapidly as it does in the Third World (2.4% per year), the enormous increases in agricultural productivity will lead to only modest per capita improvements in nutrition and consumption. The callous disregard of population problems by some governments, particularly in Africa, when there is widespread malnutrition among their own people, is an arrant disgrace.

The second problem is that prices for fertilizer and for oil (necessary for irrigation) have quadrupled in the last two or three years, and that the countries which need them most can afford them least. A study by the U.S. Department of Agriculture predicts that fertilizer prices will decline (though not to pre-1972 levels) by the end of the decade; but the oil cartel shows no signs of breaking up, indeed oil prices are expected to rise again this year. The Green Revolution cannot succeed in multiplying crop productivity without intensive irrigation and fertilization, so poor countries like Bangladesh and India cannot take full advantage of the new strains.

The third problem is that in most of the world, pricing policies offer little incentive to increase production. From Argentina to Niger to Thailand, and almost everywhere in between, governments have kept food prices artificially low, for the benefit of urban consumers. It has imply been unprofitable for farmers to

increase food production under these circumstances. And it is in this sense that America's enormous generosity in food aid ($25 billion since World War II) has been counterproductive, for recipient governments have had no incentive to develop local incentives for agriculture. (Incidentally, American food giveaways were as much a function of our domestic farm price support system as of our humanitarian and tactical policies.) There are usually good short-run arguments against letting farmers raise their prices in LDC's: namely, thousands of the poorest citizens would no longer be able to afford a bare subsistence. But without suitable incentives, LDC's will in the long run be unable to stimulate the local production of which they are capable. It is an unpleasant tradeoff.

The ironic thing about the recent shortages is that they took everyone by surprise and that they confounded the expert wisdom. For by the late sixties, as the introduction of high-yield wheat achieved spectacular successes in the Punjab, the pessimism of the middle sixties had given way to an unbridled optimism about food. In its 1969 report on the *State of Food and Agriculture*, the FAO declared that the food problems of the future would be how to dispose of surpluses rather than how to alleviate shortages. Lester Brown, who these past few years has been one of our leading pessimists, was at that time a great herald of the Green Revolution; in 1968 he hailed our "new agricultural era." And fearing overproduction, governments and farmers in the United States, Canada, and Australia—which together account for 90% of world grain exports—took steps to restrict grain acreage, lest "excess stocks" accumulate.

With reserve stocks low and acreage limited in the major grain-exporting nations, and with informed opinion overly optimistic about food supplies, the world was wholly unprepared when, in 1972, because of some unfortunate weather coincidences, world food production declined by 3%—the first decline in twenty years—while demand kept rising. Acreage is now replanted, stocks are slowly being replenished, and according to *Science* and Johnson, the difficulties of the last few years are not a prelude to coming disaster, but a temporary aberration caused by some accidents in the weather and by a lack of foresight. World resources are not so limited that the rich must kick the poor out of the lifeboat. America can be very helpful, not by curtailing her own consumption but by continuing generous technical assistance—improving grains and grain markets in the developing countries.

Is there a long-term food crisis? Probably not. Long-term problems persist, as always, and prices are still climbing, though Johnson predicts that after a few years real grain prices will return to their long-term pattern of decline. Predictions are always risky, especially with food supply, but I predict that with occasional setbacks, some luck, and a lot of hard work, people all over the world will continue to eat more and better. In the meantime, let us pray for rain. □

Book Review/Terry O'Rourke

Overloading the Scales of Justice

Justice Macklin Fleming of the California Court of Appeal has written perhaps the most perceptive and acute criticism of judicial activism yet to appear in print. Those readers accustomed to viewing critics of judicial activism primarily as yahoos whose malignant and narrow pursuits have been thwarted by the courts will be confounded by this book. For Justice Fleming is a stern legal scholar and craftsman dismayed by other judges' substitution of slogans for reasoning and personal predilection for the dictates of text and precedent.

The paramount theory that Fleming addresses is the idea of perfectibility—"the concept that with the expenditure of sufficient time, patience, energy, and money it is possible eventually to achieve perfect justice in all legal process." According to Fleming, the quest for perfect justice and legal procedure has dominated legal thought for the past twenty years, and has spawned an ever increasing scope and pace of judicial action: courts are no longer concerned simply with the adjudication of private controversies and the interpretation of traditional legal rights, but also with the resolution of almost all public issues which can be brought to life as legal causes because of alleged shortcomings in legal procedure. As a result, partisans of particular causes, unable to convince a majority of voters or legislators of the verity of their positions, routinely seek to invoke the power of the courts by accusations of imperfect procedure, thereby hoping to direct the course of subsequent events by imposing impossible procedural demands. And as the courts, in striving to achieve perfect justice, have been ready to apply increasingly rigorous standards of legal procedure, this strategy has become a powerful weapon to shape policy and effect change in society: construction of new power plants can be indefinitely delayed, issuance of licenses postponed, construction of highways halted, and military service avoided.

The Price of Perfect Justice

by Macklin Fleming
Basic Books $10.95

The quest for perfect procedure has had its greatest impact on criminal law, where the modern doctrine has almost completely displaced the concept of effective procedure; and it is this impact which is Justice Fleming's major concern. Under standards of perfect legal procedure, the parties must be free to present their contentions to the fullest extent to a jury "which must have never heard of the cause, the parties, the witnesses, and the issues, and must be wholly free from opinions or preconceptions about any proposition of law or fact likely to arise in the trial." In addition, every legal or factual argument of any possible relevance must be considered in depth, exhaustively and repetitively, in order to eliminate the possibility of error from the proceeding. And if the trail does not meet all of these requirements, then the cause must be tried again. Fleming documents numerous instances of the pursuit of perfect procedure by the courts: five months spent in the selection of a jury, the same murder charge tried five different times, prosecutions pending a decade or more, and the same issue of search and seizure being reviewed over and over again, as many as 26 times. In short, under the reigning standards of perfect procedure the guilt or innocence of the accused has become almost irrelevant because the emphasis in criminal proceedings has shifted to the determination of the correctness of the procedure used in the prosecution; the target is no longer the accused's own conduct, but the legal machinery used against him.

Justice Fleming persuasively argues that the attempt to achieve perfect legal procedure has seriously impaired the capacity of the legal system to achieve the basic goals for which it was created: namely, "to settle disputes promptly and peacefully, to restrain the strong, to protect the weak, and to conform the conduct of all to settled rules of law." By pursuing the will-o'-the-wisp of perfection, Fleming contends, the courts have neglected the key elements demanded of effective procedure: "the resolution of controversies within a reasonable time, at a reasonable cost, with reasonable uniformity." Perfect procedure is unable to convict the guilty promptly or to acquit the innocent in a manner that retains public confidence in

its accuracy, and Fleming concludes that "the deterrent effect of swift and certain punishment is lost, the feeling of just retribution disappears, and belief in the efficacy of the system of justice declines."

Justice Fleming believes that the idea of judicial perfectibility has carried with it the related concept that "judges are the chosen instruments for the achievement of perfectibility by means of the constitutional doctrines of due process and equal protection." The concept, Fleming argues, has given judges a theoretical mandate to boldly rewrite laws of every description—from criminal procedure to rights of inheritance, to regulation of personal conduct, to parole revocation, to abortion. Fleming is skeptical, for two reasons. Judges often enact their own personal predilections into law, under the guise of applying the requirements of due process or equal protection to a particular case. And, second, when they rewrite laws this way, the courts act as legislatures, a role that they are poorly equipped to perform. There is nothing new or astounding about either of Fleming's contentions. Since the heyday of ecoonomic due process, many students of the courts have similarly warned of judicial usurpation of the legislative role, even though informed opinion is frequently willing today to overlook the manner of a judicial determination and the indignities inflicted upon the separation of powers, when it approves of the outcome.

Nonetheless, in an age when the courts are creating, determining, and applying policy, choosing among alternative theories of equality, and weighing benefits for and burdens upon particular groups, Justice Fleming's analysis of the shortcomings of judicial legislation deserves serious consideration. According to Fleming, the major reason for the poor quality of most judicial solutions to legislative problems is that the "courts are extraordinarily inept instruments for political brokerage." Courts have limited access to information and pressures essential to the solution of general problems; instead, the courts' information usually comes from two partisans—each armed with an axe to grind—who appear before the court making frequently outrageous and exaggerated claims on behalf of their causes. Often, a court is shown only a small part of a general problem and solemnly assured that the part comprises the whole. Lacking access to accurate and unbiased information, provided with a limited staff and almost no money, the courts frequently pronounce general laws based upon narrow and distorted perceptions of the issues. In short, Fleming concludes that "Judicial legislation is all wrong because it is ineffectual. Experience has shown... that legislatures are better equipped, better informed, possess greater sensitivity, and exercise a broader vision in making new law than do the courts."

Although Justice Fleming offers the reader a great deal of keen, and often witty, criticism of the errancies of contemporary judicial action, he suggests little to improve the situation. Perhaps Fleming should not be faulted for this omission, for if his analysis of the roots of judicial activism is correct, there is scant hope for improvement. By pinpointing the quest for unattainable perfection as the motivating spirit of modern judicial activity, Fleming links contemporary legal theory to the dominant utopian strain of modern thought, for which prudence and moderation are outmoded concepts, and the best idea is the most recent.

Recognizing the oligarchic and trend-setting nature of the Supreme Court's role, Fleming's recommendations are almost entirely limited to the suggestion that tenure for members of that body be limited to 16 years. Firmly convinced that absolute power is corrupting, Fleming argues that a limited tenure will to some degree limit the proclivities of justices to decide cases on the basis of personal predilection. Although Justice Fleming's suggestions would have had the meritorious consequence of removing justices such as McReynolds and Douglas, it would also have sacrificed the services of justices such as John Marshall and Frankfurter. Apparently Fleming believes that the bad justices so outnumber the good, that he is willing to make such sacrifices. □

Great American Series

The great service of Mr. Harding was to give the nation a quiet period of thought. He was not a noisy President. He did not regard himself as a national entertainer. He did not divert the public mind from its own thoughts to his thoughts. He refused to break the spell of public thoughtfulness by calling a special session of Congress. He had a horror of what he called "undeveloped idealism," by which he meant fine words that were never realized in fine actions. He did not feel called to do great acts but to prevent small wrong acts from being accomplished. In this he showed one of the qualities of a great executive—When there was nothing to do, he did nothing. When the value of that kind of wisdom is recognized, Warren G. Harding will have the credit which is his due.

—*Henry Ford in the* Dearborn Independent, *August 18, 1923, on the occasion of the death of Warren Harding.*

HARRY JOHNSON)
(continued from page 27)

have been completely misleading to talk about the impending exhaustion of all "viable" sources of coal just because the surface coal could last only a few years.

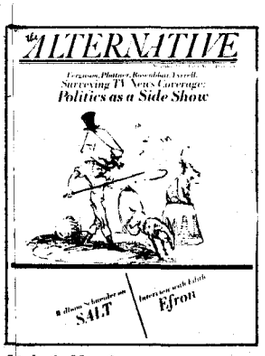
For resources with high discovery costs, such as petroleum, the number of years' supply known to exist is a function of the number of years' supply it pays to explore for, given the price of the product, the cost of the exploration, and the rate of return on a similar investment somewhere else in the economy. Therefore, a fifteen years' supply of petroleum does *not* mean that we are going to have no more petroleum in sixteen years: There was only a fifteen years' supply of petroleum thirty years ago, and there will probably be only a fifteen years' supply of petroleum a hundred years from now. Johnson does not go into this in the detail he might, probably because—as in the case of income distribution—the shrill voices are saying such utter nonsense. Yet to treat this nonsense as beneath discussion is only to allow it to continue to flourish.

It is certainly true—and important—to say, as Johnson does, that history has shown a "consistent falsification of the prophecies of successive schools of doom predictors," but perhaps also we need to know *why* they have been so wrong so often. Why these doom-and-gloom predictions have persisted or recurred is another good question. There may be something in the human psyche that creates a demand for disaster—or at least for predictions of disaster. Disaster and doom have been thriving industries for centuries, with religious, political, and environmental subsidiaries—and this long before Hollywood began making movies that allow them to share in the profits of doom.

Professor Johnson brings out the point that many environmental complaints are made "from an extremely egocentric view of society"—objections to others having life-styles different from one's own (they want more bowling alleys while we want more trees) or laments for the loss of differential gains, such as wooded seclusion in national forests to which others had little access before the rise of more general affluence. The trick the environmentalists use is to attack, not the other groups who want to live differently, but the intermediaries who represent those other groups' demands—i.e., "developers," "commercial interests," and others who lack the aura of sanctity surrounding the Sierra Club.

There are points on which a reviewer could disagree with Professor Johnson—his use of "society" where this anthropomorphic metaphor confuses crucial aspects of the actual decision-making process, his willingness to see the government tinkering in some areas where the prospects seem dim ("incomes policies," for example), and his refusal to consider the longer-run effects of certain short-run "humanitarian" policies. But these are surface blemishes on a basically very good and valuable book. □

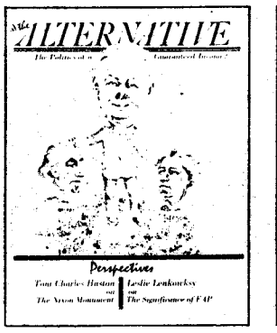
Get back issues while they last!



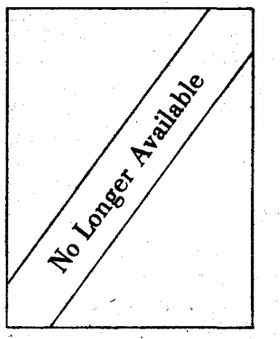
Vol. 6, No. 2.
November 1972. $2.50.
Staff study of TV news; Edith Efron interview.

Vol. 6, No. 6.
March 1973. $2.50.
Howe on Quotas; Tyrrell on W.C. Fields.

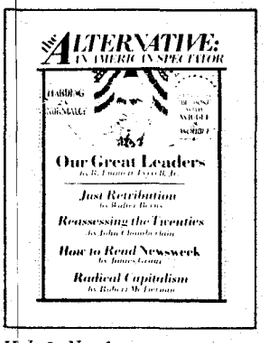
Vol. 6, No. 8.
May 1973. $2.00.
Special issue on the Cold War: reviews, essays.



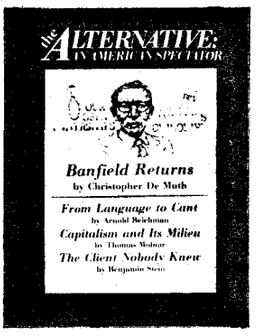
Vol. 6, No. 9.
June-Sept. 1973. $2.50.
Articles by Buchanan, Lenkowsky, Huston.



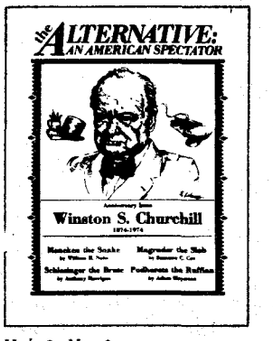
Volume 7, Nos. 1-9.
October 1973-
September 1974.



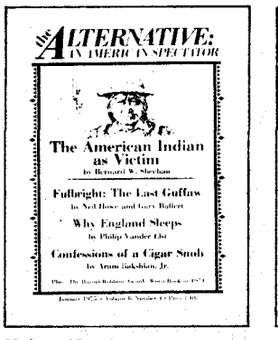
Vol. 8, No. 1.
October 1974. $2.00.
John Chamberlain, James Grant, Walter Berns.



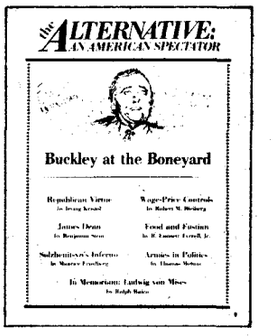
Vol. 8, No. 2.
November 1974. $1.00.
Reviews of Schlesinger, Banfield, Mencken.



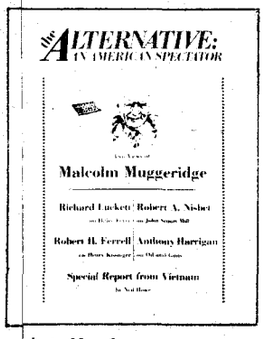
Vol. 8, No. 3.
December 1974. $1.00.
A Churchill *Festschrift*; plus review of Magruder.



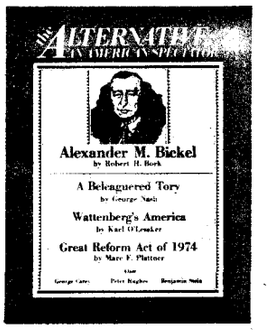
Vol. 8, No. 4.
January 1975. $1.00
Sheehan on Indians, Bakshian on Cigars.



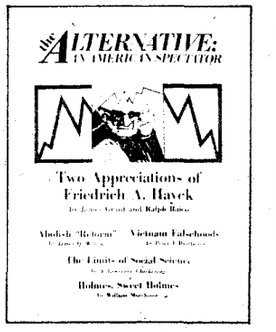
Vol. 8, No. 5.
February 1975. $1.00.
Essays by Irving Kristol, Robert Bleiberg.



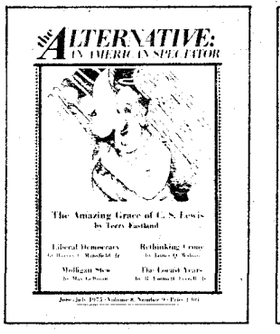
Vol. 8, No. 6.
March 1975. $1.00.
Views of Muggeridge, Kissinger, J.S. Mill.



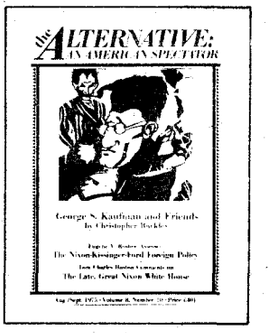
Vol. 8, No. 7.
April 1975. $1.00.
Bickel eulogized, Wattenberg reviewed.



Vol. 8, No. 8.
May 1975. $1.00.
Wilson on Reform; Grant and Raico on Hayek.



Vol. 8, No. 9.
June/July 1975. $1.00.
Mansfield on Democracy; Eastland on C.S. Lewis.



Vol. 8, No. 10.
Aug./Sept. 1975. $1.00.
Featuring Eugene V. Rostow, Tom Charles Huston

Have you missed some past issues of "The Alternative"? They include thought-provoking essays by James Q. Wilson, Irving Kristol, and Harvey Mansfield, Jr., as well as editorials and regular features by our prize-winning editor, R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Back issues are available in limited quantities. Place your order today to complete your collection of "The Alternative."

THE ALTERNATIVE, P.O. Box 877, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.

Please rush me the following back issues of *The Alternative*; I have indicated the quantity desired of each number:

Volume 6: #2 ( ); #6 ( ); #8 ( ); #9 ( ).
Volume 8: #1 ( ); #2 ( ); #3 ( ); #4 ( ); #5 ( ); #6 ( ); #7 ( ); #8 ( ); #9 ( ); #10 ( ).

Enclosed is my check for $..... .

(please print)

Name.....
Address.....
City..... State..... Zip.....

"Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." —Euripides

Current Wisdom

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST: Author Clifford Irving, the American Proust, enunciates the elements of his afflatus in a rare interview granted to Jurate Kazickas:

Asked if he saw any parallels between his own futile attempts at a cover-up and Watergate, Irving answered: "None at all. My motives were adventure, literature and money, not necessarily in that order. Their motives were based on the extension of a corrupt government."

—*International Herald Tribune*
July 7, 1975

AUTOINTOXICATION: In reviewing another heart-warming tome about our glorious radical movement that sparkled with thousands of bombings, hundreds of maimings, many murders, and many more broken lives, sage Elinor Langer displays that exquisitely honed critical sense that is at once the triumph of the ritualistic liberal and the scourge of American hypocrisy:

"More Power Than We Know" is neither manifesto nor autobiography. It is personal without being egotistical. Perhaps it reflects less sophistication than faith. Dellinger, born in 1915, is old enough not to have been discouraged by the movement's errors and not to confuse a decade with a life. He sees a "people's movement toward democracy," internally alive, renewing itself, sloughing off tyrants, breathing free. For others the vision may be less vivid. But his book is a reminder that, even if it is not an adequate counterforce against the rising manipulation in American life, still it was a force in ending the war. To that force "More Power Than We Know" is not a benediction; it is an invocation.

—*New York Times Book Review*
June 15, 1975

INTELLECTUALOIDS IN ACTION: During one of CBS-TV's more cerebral moments, TV profundicator Shana Alexander reveals her exquisite sense of justice and statecraft to an astonished James Jackson Kilpatrick:

The Mayaguez rescue is being hailed now as a great victory. But I hope, Jack, that it can soon be seen for the shameful episode it really was. I do not complain of the clumsy risky way the rescue was done—the invasion of the wrong island, the loss of so many Marines—because such things happen in a remote crisis. No, Jack, it's the crowing afterwards I object to. Not the doing, but the cockadoodle-doing as the President and his men congratulated one another. We didn't let l'il ol' Cambodia push us around. No sirree!

The Mayaguez affair exposed certain top level attitudes which had remained blurred while the war was on. Then you never knew quite what they were up to. Security considerations clouded everything. But last week their motives were quite clear and quite ugly. They were out to punish the insolent Cambodians, to show the Gooks and the world that the mighty U.S. of A. is still in charge, to vent their own rage and frustration, and—worse—to give their own people something to cheer about. And anything would do, even a rinky-dink rerun of Terry and the Pirates.

It was cynical politics of the lowest order: leaders trying to recover popularity by appealing to the most primitive instincts of the crowd. During the war, Jack, your side used to talk about "bombing them back into the Stone Age!" Well, in this vindictive, vainglorious handling of the Mayaguez Mr. Ford and Mr. Kissinger acted like Stone Age bullies themselves. So this war ends with neither a bang nor a whimper, just the hollow sound from the Oval Office of King Kong beating on his hairy chest.

—Point Counter Point,
CBS-TV's "60 Minutes"

RETURN OF A ROSSBACH: *The Bulletin*, lively journal of the National Railway Historical Society, reveals an encouraging capacity for self-correction:

Erratum: In No. 5, 1974, there was included a list of members who had passed away during the preceding year. One of the staff has now received word from Arthur L. Rossbach, Jr. that he is still alive. Our apologies to Mr. Rossbach for this unfortunate mistake.

—*The Bulletin*
Vol. 40, No. 1, 1975

THE HIGH BROW: What kind of person gorges himself on the cerebral viands of the *New York Review of Books*? We quote randomly from its gorgeous classified ads. Happy Days!:

Handsome white male, foot fetishist, in late 20s, seeks female foot fetishist. Fat women welcome. Ray M., c/o Downstairs, 167 W. 21st St., New York, NY 10011. Also into erotic tickling....

Retired, professional man wants to employ young male aid who looks like clothes model. NYR, Box 10706....

Writer, widower, late 50s, good shape, wants middle-age woman in Bergen County, NJ for mutually enjoyable and financially advantageous romance and open marriage possibility. NYR, Box 10878....

Volatile, winsome, aesthetic divorcee seeking attractive, successful businessman for meaningful, fun-filled relationship. NYR, Box 10874....

Chic, warm, witty Cape Cod courtesan, 36, own luxury apartment, offers confidential diversion to well-to-do gentlemen vacationers. NYR, Box 10771....

Oversexed male with vasectomy would like to make it at Madison Square Garden during the Star Spangled Banner at the first hockey game of the 75-76 season. NYR, Box 10904....

INSPIRATIONAL READINGS: The illustrious Governor of Vermont, Thomas P. Salmon, gives birth to a worthy candidate for the next edition of *Bartlett's*:

"...Courage is the price that life exacts for granting peace of mind."

—*Burlington Free Press*
April 21, 1975

SUBSIDIZING THE ARTS: Proof that the modern federal government is serving human needs and encouraging man's finer instincts:

Jubal Hale admits he's a bureaucrat with little to do. So he spends his working hours reading and listening to Beethoven records at his office.

Hale says it's not that he doesn't try to earn his $19,693-a-year salary as executive secretary of the Federal Metal and Non-Metallic Safety Board of Review. It's just that the board has never had anything to review in its four years, Hale said in an interview.

—*The Washington Star*
May 13, 1975

THE SOAP OPERA INTELLECTUALOID: *New York Times* reporter Lucinda Franks displays her reportorial talents:

We cannot seem to alter the disturbing reality that our American leaders have destroyed nearly an entire generation of young men for no reason.

—*New York Times Book Review*
June 15, 1975

THE WHOOP OF A LOON: The distinguished G. William Domhoff confects a conspiracy theory curiously flavored with sour grapes:

The owners and managers of large banks and corporations, with a little bit of help from their hired academics, lawyers, and public relations people, dominate everything in this country that is worth dominating—foreign policy through such organizations as the Council on Foreign Relations, Council of the Americas, and Trilateral Commission; economic policy through the likes of the Conference Board, Committee for Economic Development, and Brookings Institution; population policy through such groups as the Population Council, Population Reference Bureau, and Planned Parenthood; environmental policy.... Every one of these organizations is financed and directed by the same few thousand men who run the major banks and corporations, and every one of them is pivotal on governmental policy in its area of specialization.

—*New York Review of Books*
July 17, 1975

The Alternative's Index for Volume Eight, 1974-75

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

The Index includes all articles published in The Alternative *from October 1974 through August/September 1975. In the listings, the Roman numeral refers to the number of the issue, while the Arabic number refers to the pages on which the specific article appears.*

I: October 1974;
II: November 1974;
III: December 1974;
IV: January 1975;
V: February 1975;
VI: March 1975;
VII: April 1975;
VIII: May 1975;
IX: June/July 1975;
X: August/September 1975.

The Alternative *Index was prepared with the able assistance of Mr. Matthew Meyerson.*

I. Author Index

Asahina, Robert. "Invasion of the Body Snatchers" (book review). IX, 26-28.

Bakshian, Aram, Jr. "Confessions of a Cigar Snob" (The Great American Saloon Series). IV, 18-19.

Baras, Victor. "Standing Marx on His Head" (book review). IV, 25-27.

Beichman, Arnold. "From Language to Cant." II, 13-17.

Benston, Kim. "Sought by the Whale" (book review). VIII, 27-28.

Berns, Walter. "Justified Anger; Just Retribution." I, 5-7.

Bishirjian, Richard J. "Minerva and the Magicians" (book review). IX, 30-31.

Bleiberg, Robert M. "Return to Controls?" V, 14-16.

Bork, Robert H. "Alexander M. Bickel 1924-1974." VII, 4+.

Brantingham, Philip. "Jimmy's and All That—The University Saloon" (The Great American Saloon Series). IX, 15-16.

Brudnoy, David. "Brudnoy's Film Index" (regular feature). I, 25; II, 29; III, 24; IV, 26; V, 29; VI, 33+; VII, 31-32; VIII, 26; IX, 29; X, 36.

Brudnoy, David. "The Little Engine That Could" (book review). VI, 28-29.

Buckley, Christopher. "He Made America Laugh" (book review). X, 27.

Carey, George. "The Dance of Modern Man" (book review). VII, 25-27.

Chamberlain, John. "The Twenties: Salute to an Ancien Regime." I, 9-11.

Chickering, A. Lawrence. "Authority: Garbling the Issues" (special book review). VIII, 5-9.

Clavier, Anthony. "Reflections on a Pile of Bunting." I, 8-9.

Clor, Harry. "In Terms of Rights" (book review). V, 25-26.

Codevilla, Angelo M. "Power to the Populists" (book review). VIII, 29-31.

Cooper, Douglas W. "On Entering a Dark Age." I, 15-16.

Cosgrave, Patrick. "De Gaulle" (book review). I, 26.

——. "The Legendary Churchill." III, 5-6.

Cox, Suzanne C. "Confessions of a Charlatan" (book review). III, 22-23.

Curry, Patricia E. "Public Virtue and the Presidency." VI, 16-19.

Davis, Carl. "Political Freedom and Economic Responsibility" (The Business of America). I, 14-15.

DeMuth, Chris. "The Unheavenly City Revisited" (special book review). II, 5-8.

Dotson, Clyde L. "A Monetarist View of the Tax Cut" (The Business of America). VII, 24-25.

Doyle, Mary Jo. "The Fourteenth Chronicle" (book review). I, 21.

——. "Nothing Happens" (book review). IX, 31-32.

——. "Young Man with a Horn" (book review). III, 28.

Eastland, Terry. "The Amazing Grace of C.S. Lewis" (special book review). IX, 5-7.

Emmert, Kirk. "The Imperial Churchill." III, 7-8.

Etzold, Thomas H. "Recipe for a Potboiler" (book review). V, 25-29.

——. "The Scholar as Pontificator" (book review). IV, 23.

Fennell, J. Timothy. "Of Clerics and Cupidity." VI, 13.

Ferrell, Robert H. "The Games of Henry Kissinger" (book review). VI, 23-25.

Finn, Chester E., Jr. "A Federal Policy for Higher Education?" VIII, 16-19.

Friedberg, Maurice. "Solzhenitsyn's Inferno." V, 10-11.

Gaither, Morton. "Washington Report." IX, 12-13.

Geltman, Max. "An Evening with Mencken" (theatre review). VI, 29-30.

——. "Intellectual Skywriting" (book review). II, 32+.

——. "Is This Any Way to Write a Book?" (book review). IX, 24-25.

Gottfried, Paul. "The Coming of Post-Industrial Society" (book review). I, 18-20.

——. "History or Hysteria?" (book review). IV, 16-18.

——. "A Modern Gulliver." VII, 10-11.

——. "Revolutionaries" (book review). II, 30-31.

Grant, James. "Hayek: The Road to Stockholm." VIII, 10-12.

——. "How to Read Newsweek." I, 17-18.

Griffith, Wellington J., III. "Back in the USSR" (book review). VI, 32-33.

——. "The Moscow Mooch" (book review). III, 23-24.

Grubbs, Kenneth E., Jr. "A Muggeridge Treat" (book review). VI, 22-23.

Harrigan, Anthony. "Oil: A Military Solution." VI, 20-21.

——. "Schlesinger for the Defense." III, 14-15.

Heywood, Alton. "Politics of Consideration" (The Nation's Pulse). IV, 24.

Howe, Neil. "Special Report from Vietnam." VI, 7-13.

——. "The Outlook in Vietnam." VII, 6-10.

Howe, Neil, and Gary Bullert. "Fulbright: Thirty Years of Sagacity." IV, 8-10.

Hughes, Peter and Chris. "Our Men in Havana?" VII, 14-15.

Huston, Tom Charles. "Surviving the Fall" (special book review). X, 5-7.

Jackasses, Assorted. "Current Wisdom" (regular feature). I, 28; II, 33; III, 29; IV, 29; V, 33; VI, 34; VII, 33; VIII, 34; IX, 33; X, 38-39.

Johnson, M. Bruce. "Mission Impossible" (book review). X, 31-32.

Keene, David. "Ford and the GOP Prospect." II, 23-24.

——. "Special Election Report." IV, 30.

Keene, Karlyn. "The Perils of Poetry" (book review). V, 30-31.

Krieger, Terry. "Having What We Want" (book review). VIII, 28-29.

Kristol, Irving. "Republican Virtue vs. Servile Institutions." V, 5-9.

Kristol, William. "A Man of Honor" (book review). V, 17-18.

——. "The Victorian Churchill" (book review). III, 11-12.

Lenkowsky, Leslie. "Two Cheers for FAP" (book review). IX, 19-21.

Lieberman, Myron. "Watergate: The Bottom Line." III, 18-20.

Luckett, Richard. "The Enchanting Führer." VI, 14-15.

Machan, Tibor R. "Demythologizing the Poor." VIII, 19-20.

Mansfield, Harvey C., Jr. "Liberal Democracy as a Mixed Regime." IX, 8-12.

McDonald, W. Wesley. "Toward a War of All against All" (book review). VII, 21-22.

McTiernan, Robert. "The Machinery of Freedom" (book review). I, 23-25.

——. "A Vestige of the New Deal" (book review). IV, 14-15.

Meyerson, Adam. "Flummoxing the Fuel Question" (The Public Policy). IX, 22-23.
——. Norman Podhoretz: An Appreciation." III, 16-17.
——. "On Raising the Minimum Wage" (The Public Policy). VIII, 32-33.
Molnar, Thomas. "Armies in Politics." V, 11-13.
——. "Capitalism and Its Milieu." II, 9-10.
——. "Religion and the Urbanized Continuum." X, 11-13.
Moser, Charles A. "All the Commissar's Men" (book review). V, 24.
Murchison, William. "Holmes, Sweet Holmes." VIII, 12-13.
Nash, George. "Beleaguered Tory" (book review). VII, 19-20.
Nisbet, Robert A. "The Strange Case of John Stuart Mill" (book review). VI, 26-27.
Nolte, William H. "Irrigating the Sahara" (book review). III, 20-21.
——. "Muggeridge, Credulous Skeptic." VI, 5-7.
Northway, Martin E. "The Woodlawn Tap" (The Great American Saloon Series). VI, 15-16.
O'Lessker, Karl. "Building Bridges in the East" (book review). X, 24-26.
——. "The Imperial Presidency" (book review). II, 26-28.
——. "Wattenberg's America" (book review). VII, 22-24.
Oliver, Daniel. "The 59 Percent Solution" (book review). X, 32-33.
Pasour, E.C., Jr. "The Abuse of Land Use Planning." X, 20-22.
——. "The Illusion of Common Cause." I, 12-14.
——. "Protection: Let the Consumer Beware." IX, 16-17.
Pearson, George H. "Investment in Ideas" (The Business of America). IX, 25-26.
Perrin, Robert G. "Melancholy Frenchman" (book review). VII, 28-29.
Plattner, Marc F. "A Campaign Reform for Yesteryear." VII, 5-6.
Plunkitt, George Washington. "The Bootblack Stand" (a frequent feature). I, 22; II, 24; III, 27; IV, 28; V, 28; VII, 28; VIII, 31; X, 30.
Rachner, Jane. "Ms. Mitty's New American Dream." IV, 12-13.
Raico, Ralph. "A Libertarian's Basic Repertoire" (frequent feature): "Nock and Flynn," II, 11-12; "Ludwig von Mises," V, 21-23; "Political Writings of Richard Cobden," VI, 30-32; "A Libertarian Maestro" (F.A. Hayek), VIII, 21-23.
Regnery, Henry. "Our Orchestras and Their Purpose." II, 20-22.
Reinken, Paul E. "Let Us Now Praise Natural Monopoly" (The Business of America). III, 13-14.
Rosow, Jerome M. "The Human Side of Productivity" (The Business of America). V, 13-14.
Rostow, Eugene V. "The Proper Goals of Our Foreign Policy." X, 8-11.
Rusthoven, Peter J. "The Nation's Pulse" (frequent column): "Common Sense about Intelligence," VIII, 13-15; "The Mob in Manhattan," IX, 18-19.
——. "The Public Policy" (frequent feature): "Uncle Sam, M.D.," I, 11-12; "Responding to Crime: Deterrence vs. Rehabilitation," II, 17-18; "On the Pardoning of Richard Nixon," III, 26-28; "Racing with the Left to Armageddon," IV, 13-14; "Messing Up Ma Bell," V, 18-20; "Busing Revisited: The Case of Boston," VII, 30-31.
——. "Vietnam: Setting the Record Straight" (book review). VIII, 23-26.
Schaefer, David L. "The Corruption of the Public Spirit" (book review). X, 34-35.
——. "Democratic Statesmanship and Morality." VII, 15-18.
Sheehan, Bernard W. "The American Indian as Victim." IV, 5-8.
Sisk, John P. "The Motherland of Invention" (book review). X, 23-24.
Slemp, C. Bascom. "Letter from a Whig" (frequent feature): "Needed—A Living Former President," I, 16-17; "The Republic Lives On," II, 19-20; "Conspiracy in America Today," III, 25-26; "Home for Re-Election," IV, 20-21; "A Vanishing Species," V, 16-17; "The New Congress," VI, 19-20.
Somers, Al. "The *Emperor*'s New Clothes" (music review). IV, 25.
——. "Sibelius: Seven Symphonies" (music review). I, 22-23.
Starr, Roger. "Stripping Bare Her Bachelors" (book review). X, 28-30.
Stearns, Robert. "WIN(D)." IV, 22-23.
Stein, Benjamin. "All the President's Men" (book review). II, 28-29.
——. "The Client Nobody Knows." II, 18-19.
——. "Fireside, Armchair, Secrets, Smiles" (book review). IV, 21-22.
——. "The Talkies" (regular feature): "*Badlands* and *Chinatown*," I, 27; "*The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* and *California Split*," II, 31-32; "*Harry and Tonto*," III, 21-22; "*Amarcord*," IV, 27-28; "*The Phantom of the Paradise*," V, 31; "*Stavisky* and *Young Frankenstein*," VI, 27-28; "*Lacombe, Lucien*," VII, 18-19; "*Janis* and *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*," VIII, 15-16; "*The Godfather—Part 2*," IX, 28-29; "*The Day of the Locust*," X, 22-23.
——. "James Dean Is Not Dead" (book review). V, 20-21.
Steinberg, Arnold. "The Hundred Million Dollar Payoff" (book review). I, 20.
Stillman, J. Whitney. "Literature Reconsidered." VII, 11-13.
——. "Millicent H. Fenwick: Reality in Our Time" (Eminentoes). X, 2+.
Szasz, Thomas. "Your Last Will and Your Free Will." II, 10-11.
Tyrrell, R. Emmett, Jr. "The Continuing Crisis" (regular feature): I, 2; II, 2; III,2; IV, 2; V, 2; VI, 2; VII, 2; VIII, 2+; IX, 2.
——. Editorial (regular feature): "Political Leadership: A Question Flummoxed," I, 4; "A Theory of Progress," II, 4+; Honeyfogling Inflation," III, 4+; "The Harold Robbins Award" (book review), IV, 4; "Food and Fustian in Rome," V, 4+; "Timeless Buncombe at the UN," VI, 4+; "Unsafe at Any Metabolic Rate," VIII, 4§; "Once Again, The Locust Years," IX, 4+; "Politicians: Rhapsodies on a Theme," X, 4+.
Vander Elst, Philip. "The Warrior Churchill—1940." III, 10-11.
——. "Why Britain Is So Left-Wing." IV, 10-11.
——. "A Year of Disgrace." X, 18-19.
Vree, Dale. "Prophecy, Providence, and Politics." X, 13-17.
Wallin, Jeffrey D. "The Warrior Churchill—1915." III, 8-10.
Weisberger, Siegfried. "The Saturday Night Club" (The Great American Saloon Series). II, 25-26.
Wilson, James Q. "Abolish 'Reform'." VIII, 9-10.
——. "Checking Our Premises on Crime." IX, 13-15.

II.
Books Reviewed

Aron, Raymond. *The Imperial Republic: The United States and the World 1945-1973.* (Thomas Etzold). IV, 23.
Bailyn, Bernard. *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson.* (George Nash). VII, 19-20.
Banfield, Edward. *The Unheavenly City Revisited.* (Chris DeMuth). II, 5-8.
Barron, John. *KGB: The Secret Work of Soviet Secret Agents.* (Charles A. Moser). V, 24.
Barthelme, Donald. *Guilty Pleasures.* (Terry Krieger). VIII, 28-29.
Bell, Daniel. *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society.* (Paul Gottfried). I, 18-20.
Bernstein, Carl, and Bob Woodward. *All the President's Men.* (Benjamin Stein). II, 28-29.
Berton, Ralph. *Remembering Bix: A Memoir of the Jazz Age.* (Mary Jo Doyle). III, 28.
Bridge, J.W., editor. *Fundamental Rights.* (Harry Clor). V, 25-26.
Brown, Clifford W., Jr. *Jaws of Victory.* (W. Wesley McDonald). VII, 21-22.
Buckley, William F., Jr. *United Nations Journal: A Delegate's Odyssey.* (William Kristol). V, 17-18.
Burke, Vincent J. and Vee. *Nixon's Good Deed: Welfare Reform.* (Leslie Lenkowsky). IX, 19-21.
Caddy, Douglas. *The Hundred Million Dollar Payoff: How Big Labor Buys Its Democrats.* (Arnold Steinberg). I, 20.
Caro, Robert A. *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York.* (Karl O'Lessker). X, 24-26.
Churchill, Winston S. *Great Contemporaries.* (William Kristol). III, 11-12.
Crozier, Brian. *DeGaulle: Man of Tomorrow.* (Patrick Cosgrave). I, 26.
Cuddihy, John Murray. *The Ordeal of Civility.* (Max Geltman). IX, 24-25.
Dalton, David. *James Dean: The Mutant King.* (Benjamin Stein). V, 20-21.
Eidelberg, Paul. *A Discourse on Statesmanship: The Design and Transformation of the American Polity.* (David L. Schaefer). X, 34-35.
Epstein, Julius. *Operation Keelhaul: The Story of Forced Repatriation.* (Wellington J. Griffith III). VI, 32-33.
Friedman, David. *The Machinery of Freedom: Guide to a Radical Capitalism.* (Robert McTiernan). I, 23-25.
Gans, Herbert. *Popular Culture and High Culture.* (Robert Asahina). IX, 26-28.
Gilder, George. *Naked Nomads.* (Roger Starr). X, 28-30.
Grayson, C. Jackson, Jr., with Louis Neeb. *Confessions of a Price Controller.* (M. Bruce Johnson). X, 31-32.
Green, Roger, and Walter Hooper. *C.S. Lewis: A Biography.* (Terry Eastland). IX, 5-7.
Heller, Joseph. *Something Happened.* (Mary Jo Doyle). IX, 31-32.

Herndon, Venable. *James Dean: A Short Life.* (Benjamin Stein). V, 20-21.
Himmelfarb, Gertrude. *On Liberty and Liberalism: The Case of John Stuart Mill.* (Robert A. Nisbet). VI, 26-27.
Hobsbawm, E.J. *Revolutionaries.* (Paul Gottfried). II, 30-31.
Hobson, Fred, Jr. *Serpent in Eden: H.L. Mencken and the South.* (William H. Nolte). III, 20-21.
Kalb, Marvin and Bernard. *Kissinger.* (Robert H. Ferrell). VI, 23-25.
Kenner, Hugh. *A Homemade World: The American Modernist Writers.* (John P. Sisk). X, 23-24.
Lazarus, Simon. *The Genteel Populists.* (Angelo M. Codevilla). VIII, 29-31.
Le Carré, John. *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy.* (Benjamin Stein). IV, 21-22.
Ludington, Townsend, editor. *The Fourteenth Chronicle: Letters and Diaries of John Dos Passos.* (Mary Jo Doyle). I, 21.
McInnes, Neil. *The Western Marxists.* (Victor Baras). IV, 25-27.
Magruder, Jeb Stuart. *An American Life: One Man's Road to Watergate.* (Suzanne C. Cox). III, 22-23.
Mandelstam, Nadezhda. *Hope against Hope* and *Hope Abandoned.* (Karlyn Keene). V, 30-31.
Marchetti, Victor, and John D. Marks. *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence.* (Thomas H. Etzold). V, 26-29.
Meredith, Scott. *George S. Kaufman and His Friends.* (Christopher Buckley). X, 27.
Milgram, Stanley. *Obedience to Authority.* (A. Lawrence Chickering). VIII, 5-9.
Molnar, Thomas. *God and the Knowledge of Reality.* (Richard J. Bishirjian). IX, 30-31.
Muggeridge, Malcolm. *Chronicles of Wasted Time.* (Kenneth E. Grubbs, Jr.). VI, 22-23.
Nisbet, Robert A. *The Sociology of Emile Durkheim.* (Robert G. Perrin). VII, 28-29.
Nobile, Philip. *Intellectual Skywriting: Literary Politics and the* New York Review of Books. (Max Geltman). II, 32+.
Roche, John. *Sentenced to Life: Reflections on Politics, Education, and Law.* (Robert McTiernan). IV, 14-15.
Rosenblatt, Roger. *Black Fiction.* (Kim Benston). VIII, 25-26.
Rothbard, Murray N. *Egalitarianism as a Revolt against Nature and Other Essays.* (David Brudnoy). VI, 28-29.
Rusher, William A. *The Making of the New Majority Party.* (Daniel Oliver). X, 32-33.
Safire, William. *Before the Fall.* (Tom Charles Huston). X, 5-7.
Schlesinger, Arthur M., Jr. *The Imperial Presidency.* (Karl O'Lessker). II, 26-28.
Schrag, Peter. *Test of Loyalty: Daniel Ellsberg and the Rituals of Secret Government.* (R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.). IV, 4.
Stern, Fritz. *The Failure of Illiberalism: Essays on the Political Culture of Modern Germany.* (Paul Gottfried). IV, 16-18.
Sutton, Antony. *National Suicide: Military Aid to the Soviet Union.* (Wellington J. Griffith III). III, 23-24.
Thompson, Sir Robert. *Peace Is Not at Hand.* (Peter J. Rusthoven). VIII, 23-26.
Wattenberg, Ben J. *The Real America: A Surprising Examination of the State of the Union.* (Karl O'Lessker). VII, 22-24.
Wilson, James Q. *Political Organizations.* (George Carey). VII, 25-27.

Changing Your Address?

Please attach address label from the back cover of your *Alternative* is the space below. Print your new address and mail this form to *The Alternative.* Important: allow six weeks for address change. Always attach address label when writing to us about your subscription.

The Alternative
Circulation Department
P.O. Box 877
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

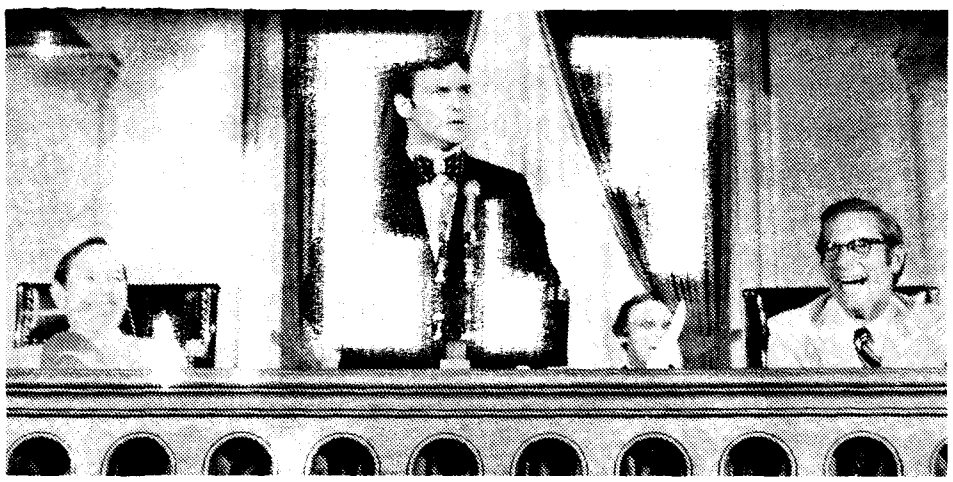
(Please attach address label here.)

☐ Please renew my subscription for one year. Enclosed is my check for $8.00.

Name.....
Address.....
City.....
State..... Zip.....
Date of change.....

There is
opportunity
in America!

Sarkes Tarzian Inc. Bloomington, Indiana



R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr., editor of *The Alternative*, delivering remarks after receiving an award from the American Institute for Public Service, in the Old Supreme Court Chamber on July 23. (Left to right, Sen. Robert A. Taft, Tyrrell, Rep. John H. Buchanan, Hon. William E. Simon.)

The Editor of "The Alternative" Speaks... The Secretary of the Treasury Laughs...

For that matter so do the senior Senator from Ohio, Senator Robert A. Taft, Jr., and Alabama's Republican Congressman, Congressman John H. Buchanan. No matter how burdensome one's cross might be, Tyrrell makes people laugh. So does "The Alternative." It also makes people think.

There is no other magazine in America that is so successful in combining merriment and thoughtfulness. No other magazine offers its readers serious analysis, factual information, and a stained glass window on the world of the absurd. This is a civilized answer to urbane yokelry. It is never sold next to the "New York Review of Books." In fact it is rarely sold on newsstands. To be sure to get this increasingly acclaimed intellectual review use this subscription form. And while you have the opportunity, why not subscribe for a friend? Doesn't someone you know deserve a merry respite from the heavy burdens of this world? Act now...and Happy Days!

THE ALTERNATIVE, P.O. Box 877, Bloomington, Indiana 47401

Please enter a _____ new _____ renewal subscription to *The Alternative*.

☐ One year $8 ☐ Two years $15 ☐ Three years $20

Name _____
(*Please print*)

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

If this is a gift subscription, please check here ☐ *and enclose your name and address.*